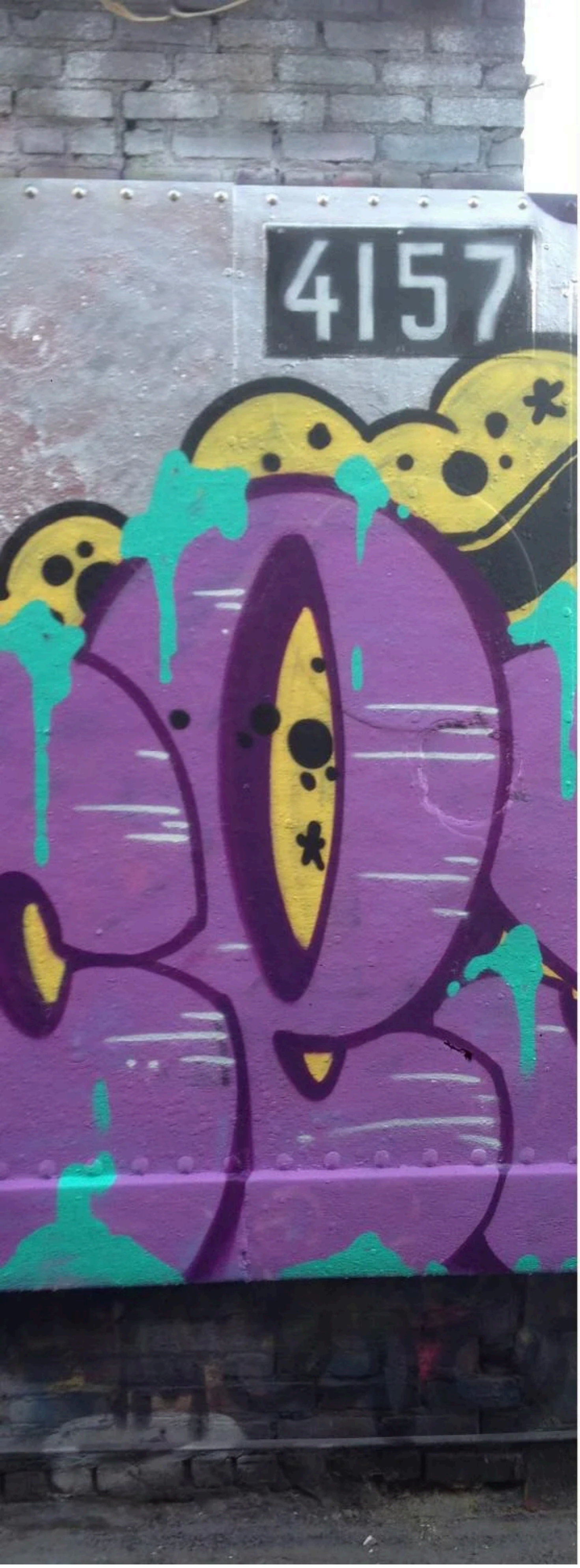
BBB
MAGAZINE

BIZARRE BEYOND BELIEF MAGAZINE

ARTS + CULTURE

ISSUE #18
APRIL
2015

FUTURE FUNK • PERSUE
HOACS • ASKEW STUDIO VISIT
SPACE MCK • STIKKI PEACHES
CES • HOUSE OF MEGGS



Cover photo: 'Rise & Fall' , 46x46"
Acrylic & aerosol on canvas 2015

Dedicated to the brilliant, beautiful and bizarre. Whimsical tales, visuals and various odds and ends about obscure and misunderstood sub-cultures.

Bizarre Beyond Belief is a bi-monthly digital publication & daily updated blog with an online shop.

Disclaimer: Some of the content on this site may contain offensive nature. BBB does not condone or promote the activities portrayed, it is merely documentation of said sub-cultures.

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BIZARRE BEYOND BELIEF
MAGAZINE
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ISSUE #17
FEBRUARY
2015

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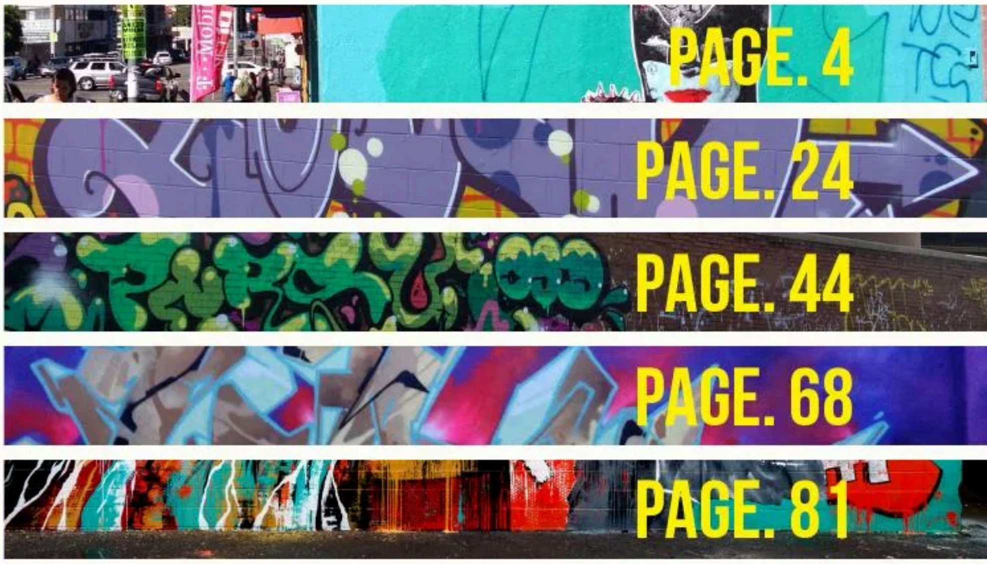

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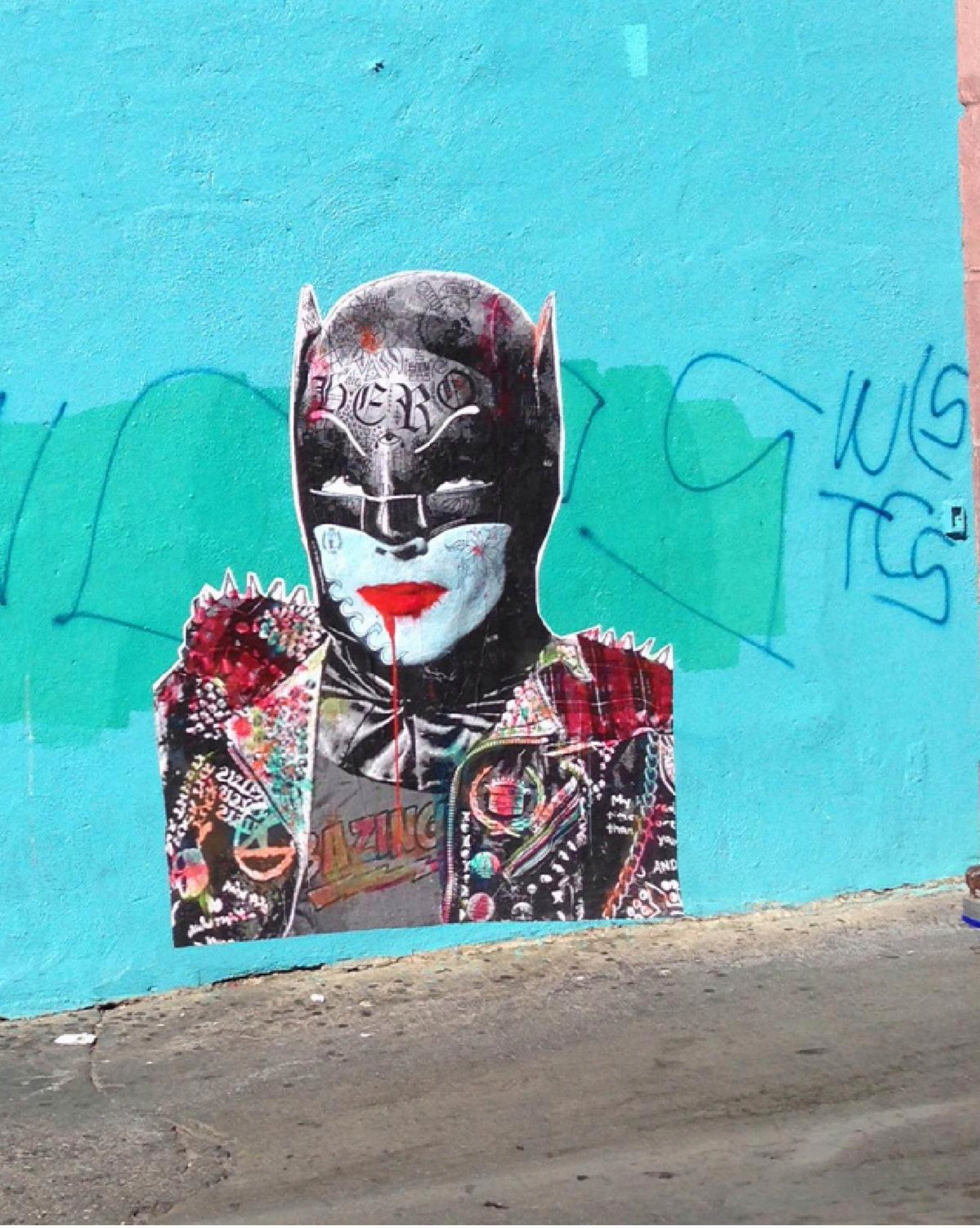
STIKKI PEACHES


HERO
BAZING

ABOVE
SUCK MY DICK
ABOVE
ABOVE

Bizarre Beyond Belief: What fascinated you about street art to begin your journey of pasting and creating in the streets?

Stikki Peaches: I've always loved the evolution process when placing work on the streets. Seeing the piece transform as time goes by and eventually disappearing.

BBB: Did you start off as a fine artist first and then hit the streets or vice versa?

SP: From a very young age I've been drawing, painting & creating. As an adult I was always involved or worked in the creative fields, so I think it's safe to say that eventually ''hitting the streets'' was somewhat in the cards.

BBB: How does your creative process differentiate between indoor work and outdoor work?

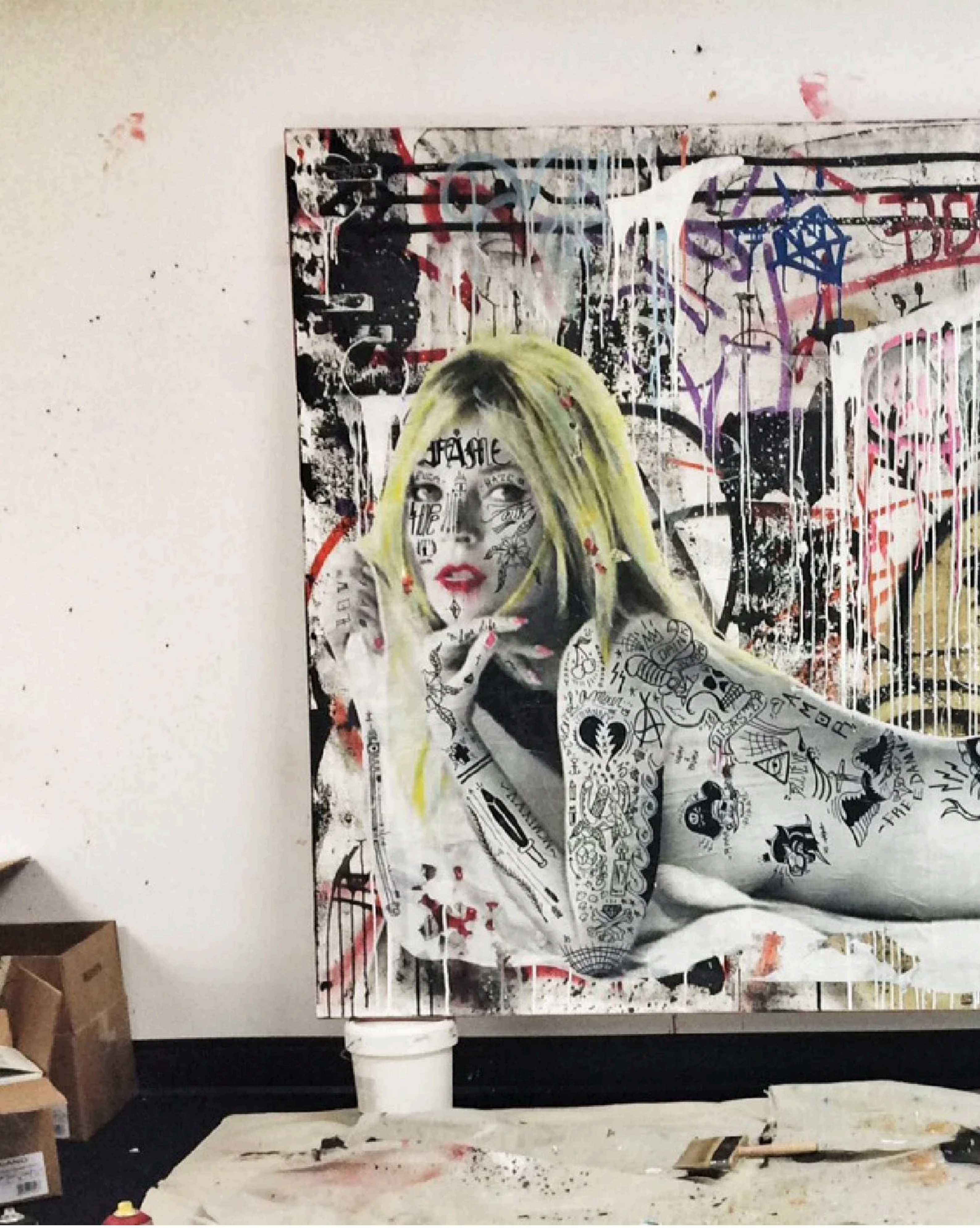
SP: It's actually very similar in how I see both. I treat the streets as a potential canvas. Some walls are just perfect with their textures, doors or background, and some need a little extra something to make it pop, while when working on an actual canvas or mural, I try to bring the outdoor elements and factors of weathering, ageing, fading, and human interaction to the piece to get that authentic feeling.

BBB: What is it about re-appropriating pop culture icons that you find the most effective?

SP: Re-working pop culture icons today is something that stems from my childhood. Most of my works are based on characters or subjects that I loved and admired at some point in my life. That nostalgic/vintage feeling I get when revisiting old comic books, super heroes, movies, music / musicians, brings back childhood memories and moments in a time where things were much simpler and pleasant.

BBB: You are based in Montreal, but have created all over the world, what is it about Montreal that you find the most appealing?

WHAT IF ART RULED THE WORLD?
MUGA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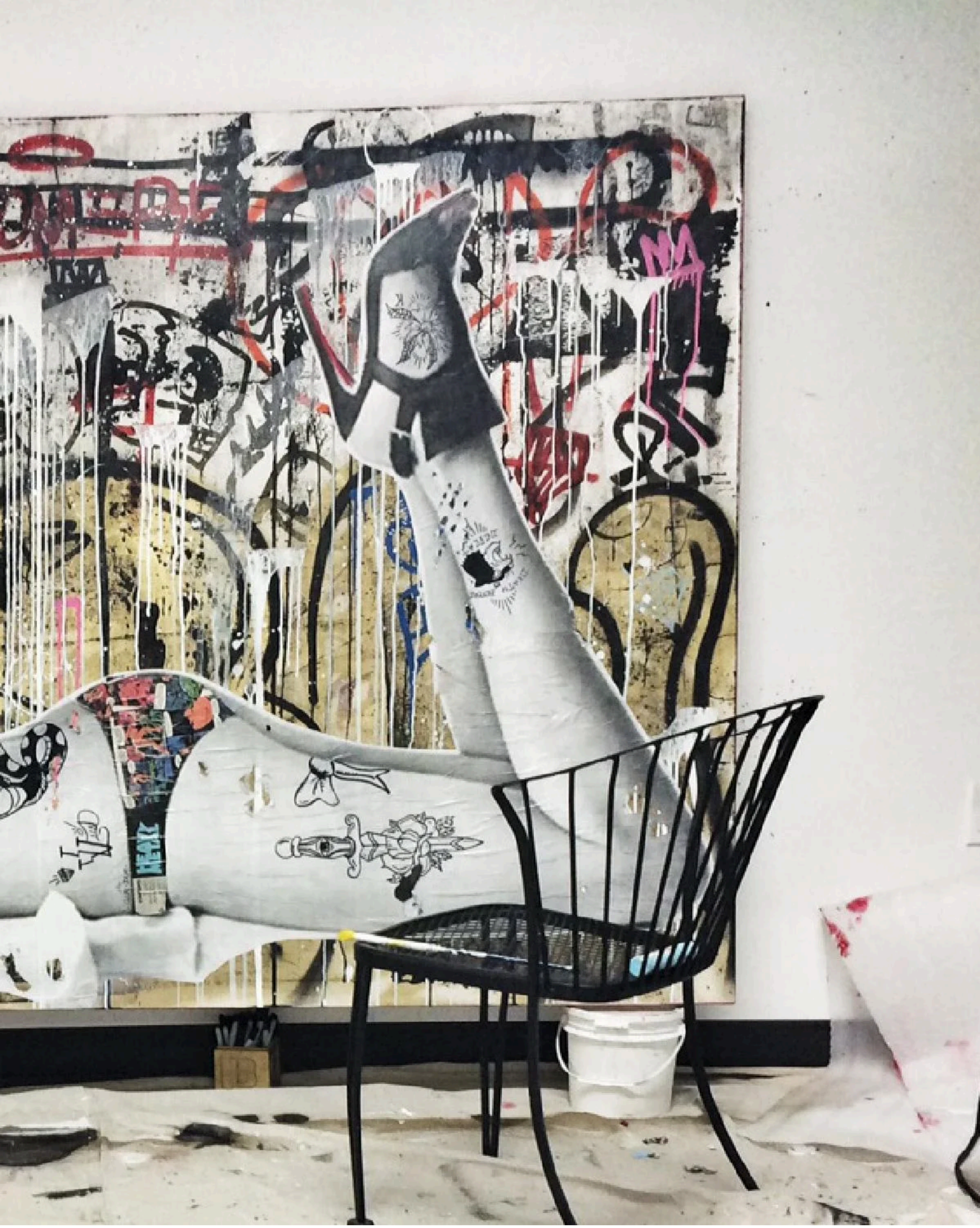


SP: The simple fact that Montreal is a multicultural melting pot of inspiration while being 'small' compared to other major cities in the world - but we hold our own. I like to think of Montreal as "the little engine that could," being right up there with the big boys. I love my city.

BBB: How would you describe the landscape of graffiti vs. street art in Montreal?

SP: Forever changing, forever evolving and in some cases living together in perfect harmony, like Ebony and Ivory. Wow. Remember that song? It'll now be stuck in my head for the next 3 days.

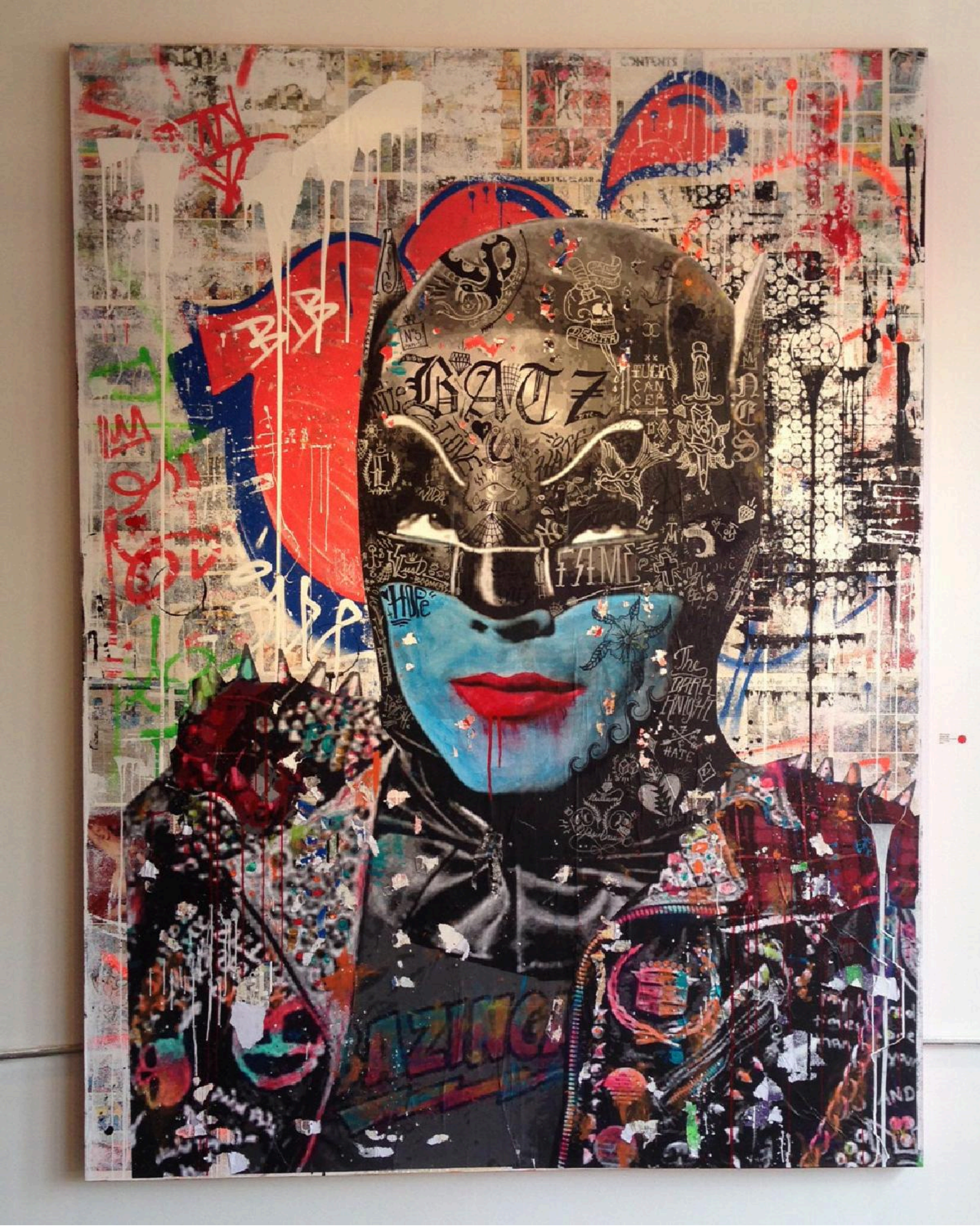
BBB: How does Montreal compare to other parts of the world you've worked in such as Berlin or Paris?

SP: It's much smaller than most cities, so in some cases its easier to maneuver around and get work done. At the same time its very similar to other major cities having certain areas and neighbourhoods that are slammed with street art and graffiti which tend to last longer.

BBB: Your tagline "What if Art Ruled the World?" is a beautiful and meaningful phrase, how did this come to be your mantra?

SP: While going through a rough ride and time in my life, I turned to my art, which lead me to question it, and realized that my art was a therapeutic escape to what I was living at that moment. It got me through some hard shit and made things much clearer for me to understand. WIARTW? The answer to that is and will be different from one person to another, whether positive or negative, the question strikes up a dialogue and/or debate. What does art do for you? Does it move you? Is it important in your life, your society, your world? Art Heals.

BBB: If you were to name your top 3 artists (any time/any field), who would they be and why?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BATZ
FAME
HOPE
The DARK KNIGHT
HATE
AZING

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED THE EVOLUTION PROCESS WHEN PLACING WORK ON THE STREETS

BOY ALTAR
its like
STIKKI
PEACHES

SP: Michael Jackson (Legend and the reason why I can moonwalk like nobody's business),
Jackson Pollock (Ahead of his time), and
George Lucas (an inspiration and creative genius).

BBB: If you were hammering out a big studio session what 5 albums would be bumping on the ghetto blaster?

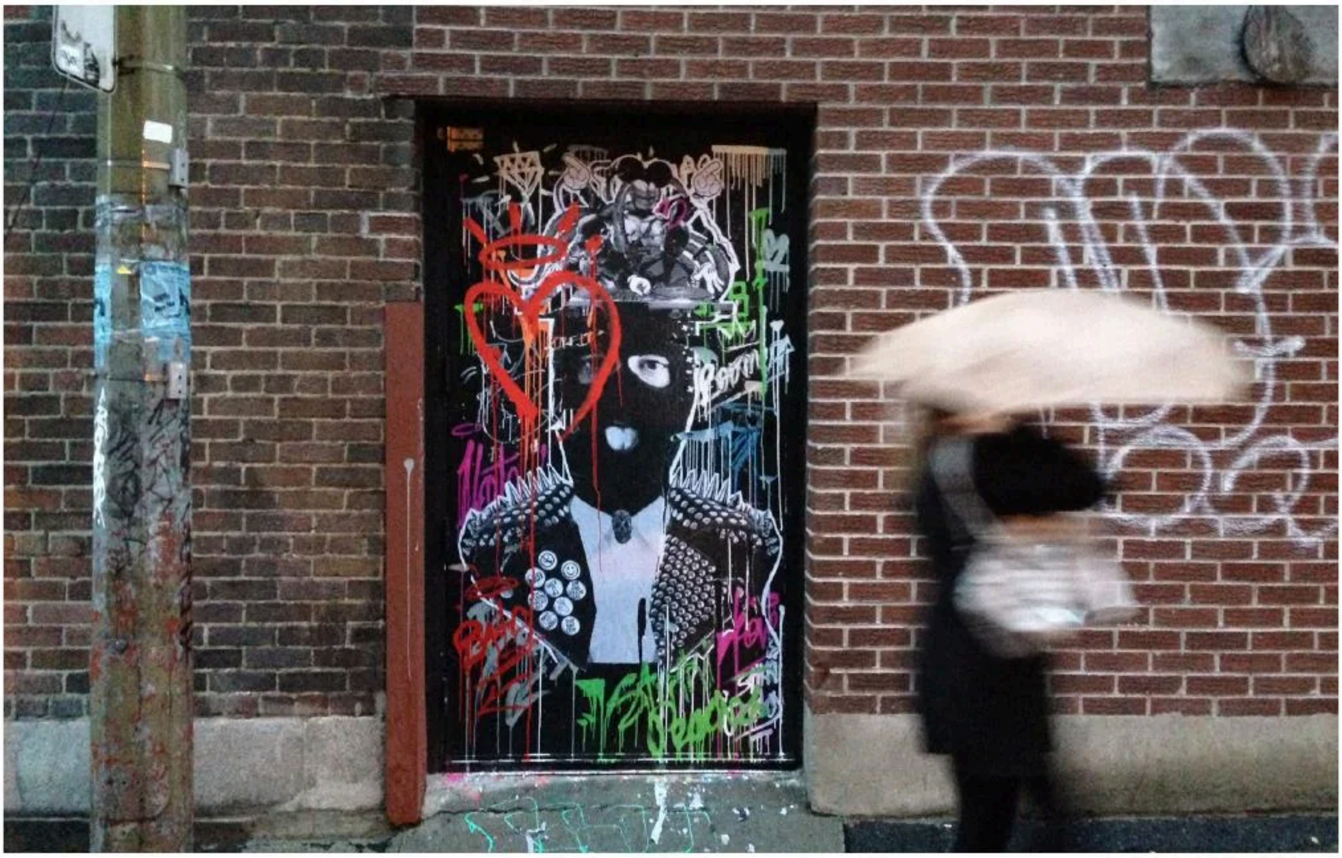
SP: Damn, I have a few Ghetto Blasters…none of them work, but they're awesome to look at. 5 albums in no particular order…MJ - "Thriller"…Nirvana- "Nevermind"…Radiohead - "Ok Computer"…Bonobo - "Black Sands" …Wu Tang Clan - "Enter the Wu-Tang"…I'll throw in a 6th with Montreal's own Arcade Fire - "Funeral."

BBB: With 2014 long gone, what can we expect of Stikki Peaches in 2015?

SP: More travels, more evolution, less instagram.

B B B M

WWW.STIKKIPEACHES.TUMBLR.COM



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RSAK

ASKEW ONE STUDIO VISIT

We interviewed Askew several issues ago and had the chance to get to him a little better via our chats digitally, which was an absolute treat. However, on our most recent trip down under we were lucky enough to meet the man in person.

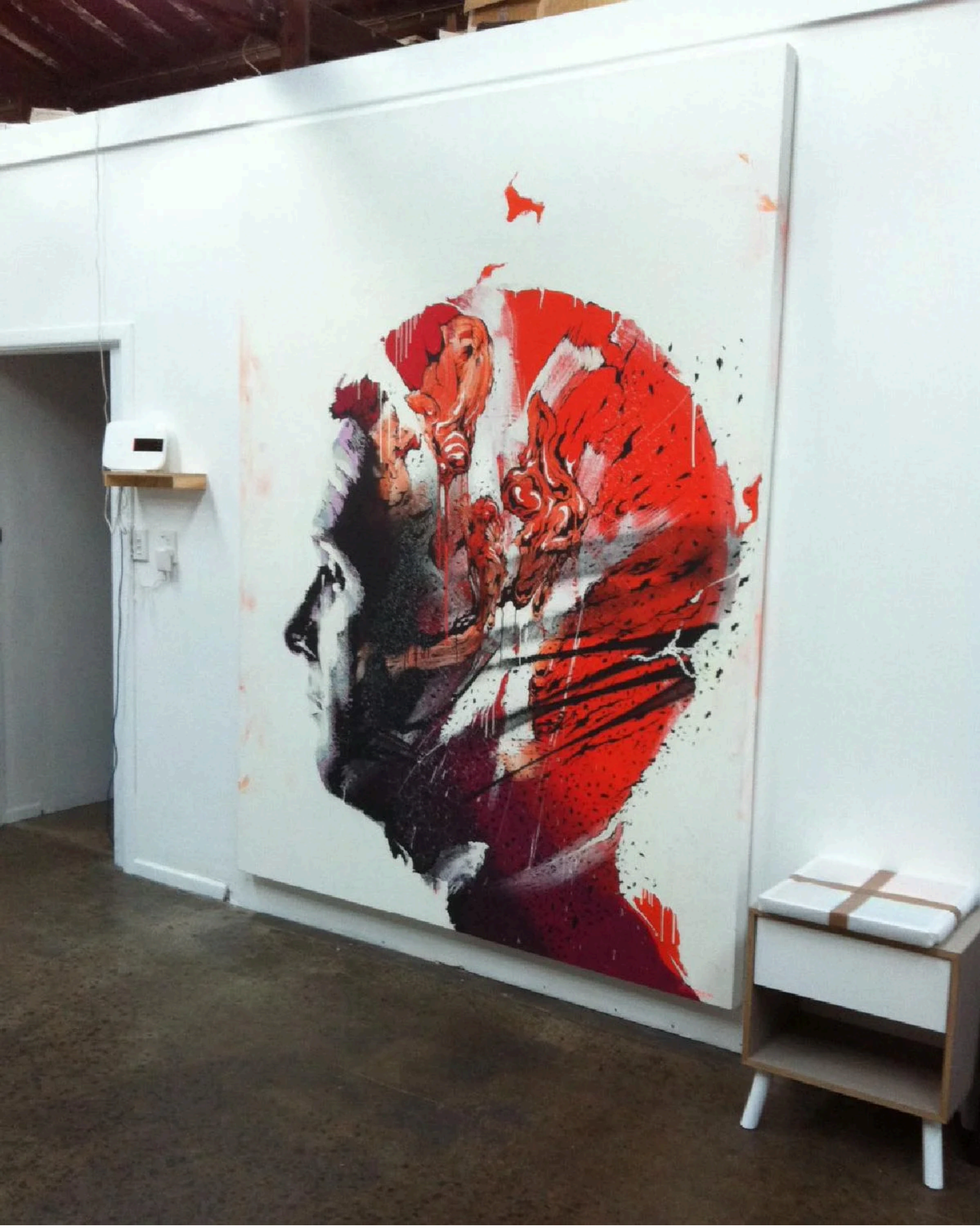
We met up and he took us on a tour of his hometown (Auckland, New Zealand) and then we headed over to his amazing studio for drinks, chilling and some philosophical discussion.

Not only is Askew one of our favourite artists, but he is one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet. On top of that, the dude is an absolute historian when it comes to Kiwi and Polynesian culture.

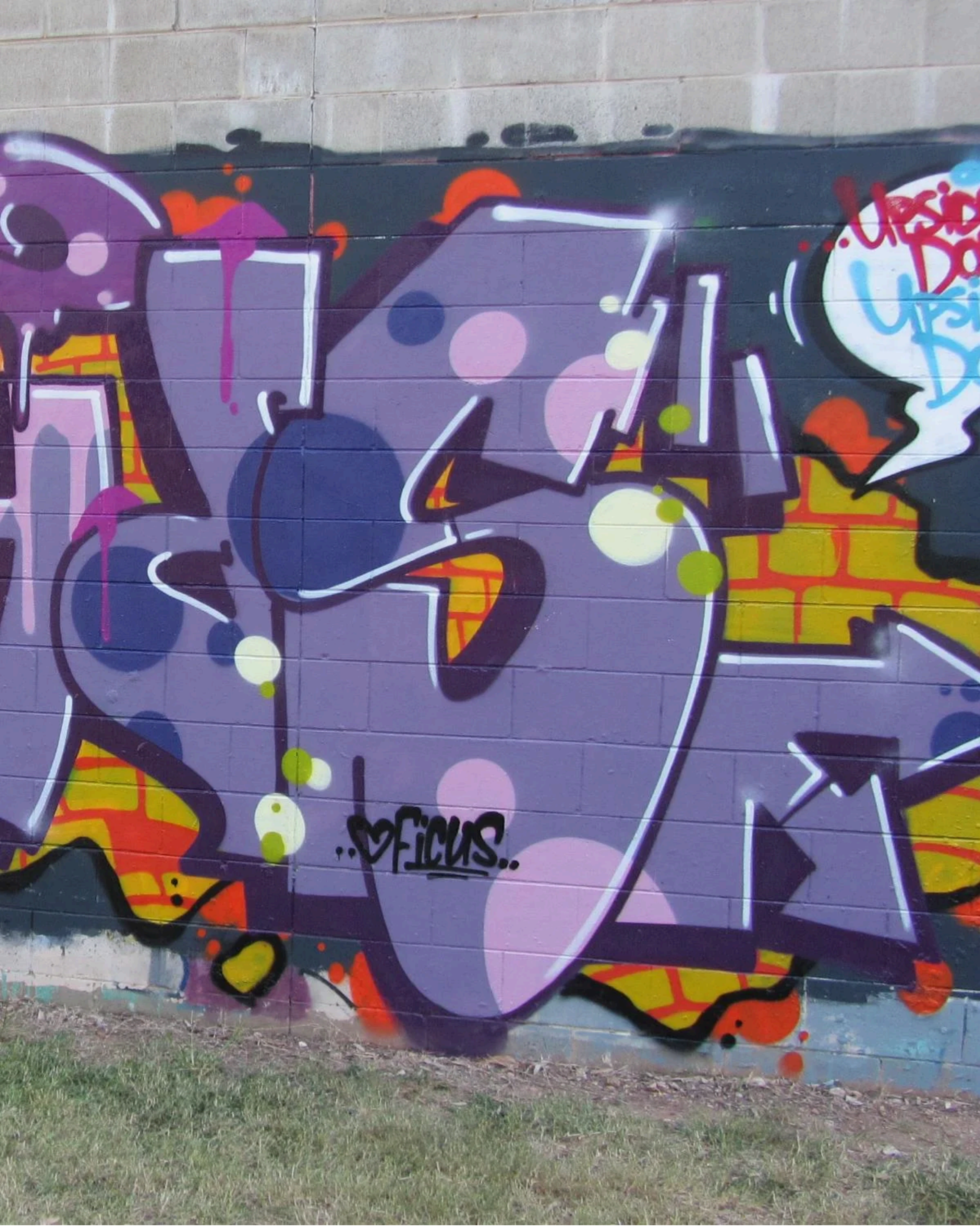
That being said, it's safe to say that all of his incredible work not only has the ability to stimulate any viewer, but is rooted with deep thought and research.

Being the legend that he is, we're honoured to call him a friend and we can't wait to see what he's got in store for the future.

WWW.ASKEW1.COM



SPACE MCK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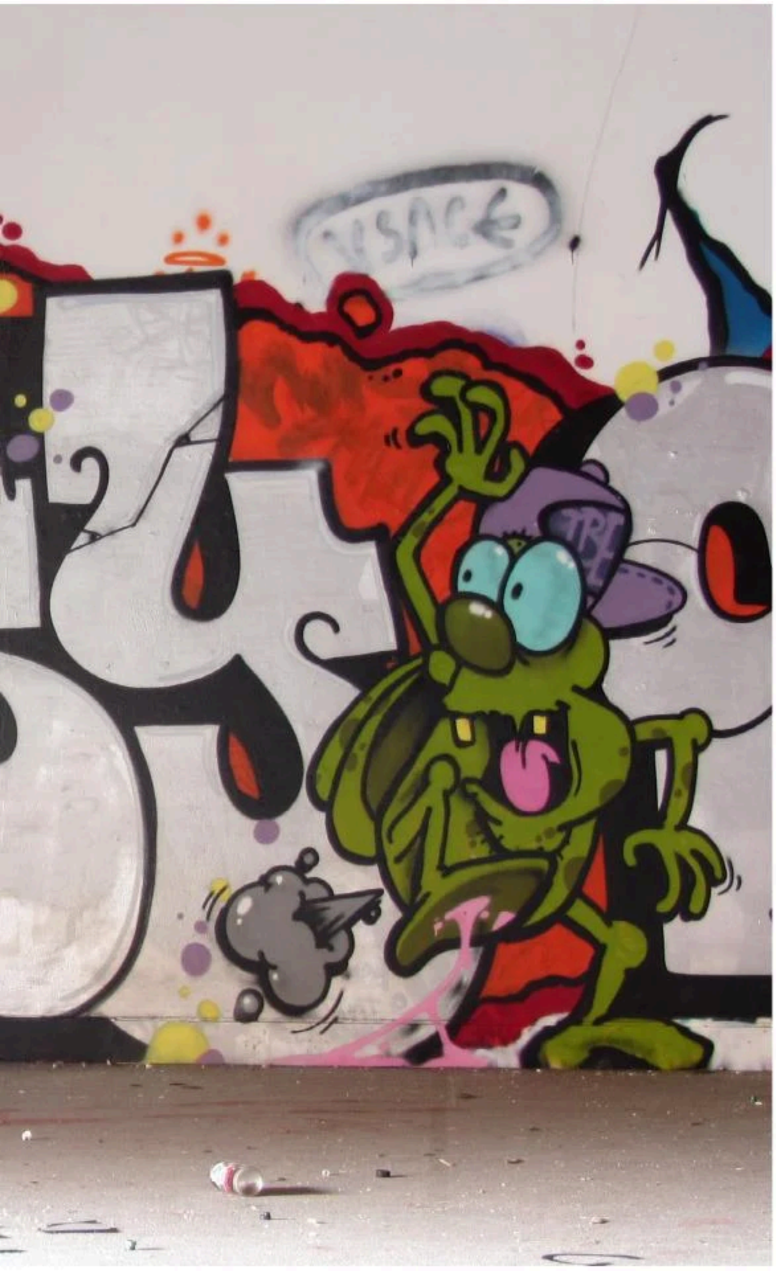
Bizarre Beyond Belief: Was graffiti your first interaction with the art world or were you interested in the field prior to graffiti?

SPACE: Graffiti was definitely the first introduction. When I started I was in it for the vandalism, not the artistic side of it.

BBB: What in particular fascinated you about the craft?

SPACE: I guess I was fascinated by how one person can cause so much damage and get their name in so many locations.

BBB: What was the first graffiti or street art you saw



and did anything in particular stand out to you?

SPACE: The first graffiti I saw were tags and pieces by my city's kings - Farts and Roten. I remember thinking "How do they do so much" and then one day I was walking along and I saw some guys tagging on a bunch of stuff in front of everyone. When they got closer I realized they were doing Farts and Roten tags and that's when I realized if you wanna be a king - you have to go all out.

BBB: Many graffiti artists maintain a double-life, are your family and/or friends privy to your illegal past time?

SPACE: Most people I know are aware that I do graffiti but most don't realize what really goes on in a full time writer's lifestyle.

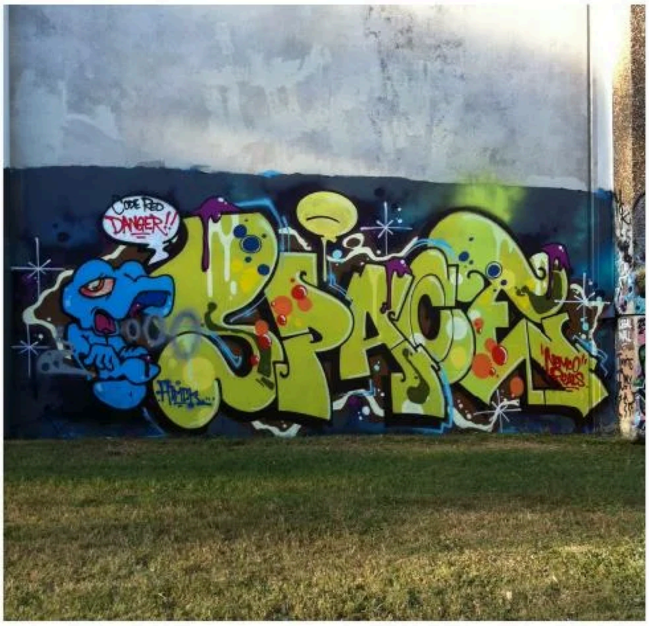
BBB: Considering Australian cities heavily policed, what are the conditions of painting graffiti there?

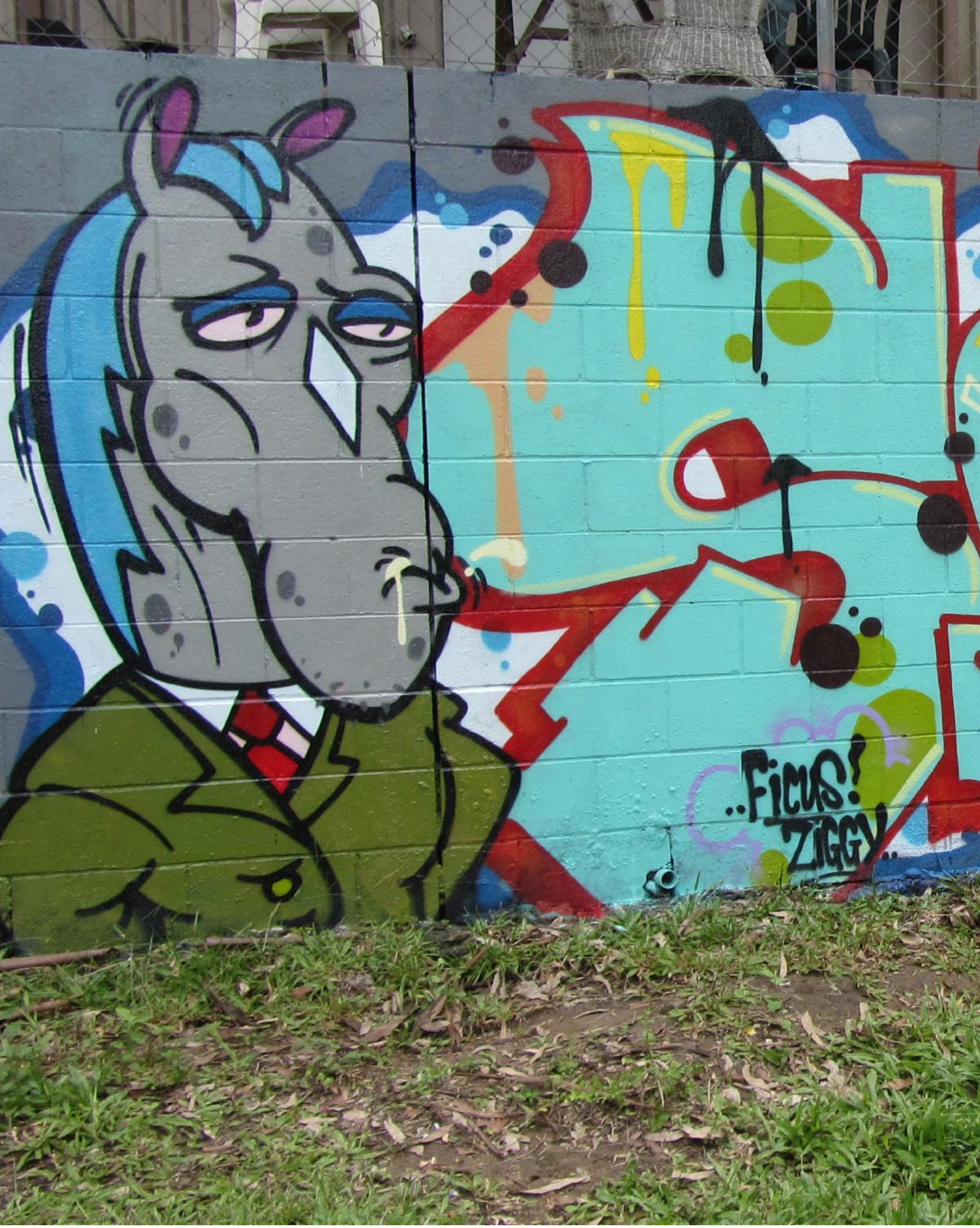
SPACE: It varies from state to state. Sometimes the prison time is comparable, or more than that of violent crimes.

BBB: How does Brisbane compared to other neighbouring cities such as Sydney or Melbourne?

SPACE: The local council invest a lot of time and big money in graffiti removal and has almost won the war on graffiti. A tourist probably wouldn't even see graffiti in Brisbane unless they shown where to find it.

BBB: On that note, Australia or internationally, what is your favourite city to paint in and why?

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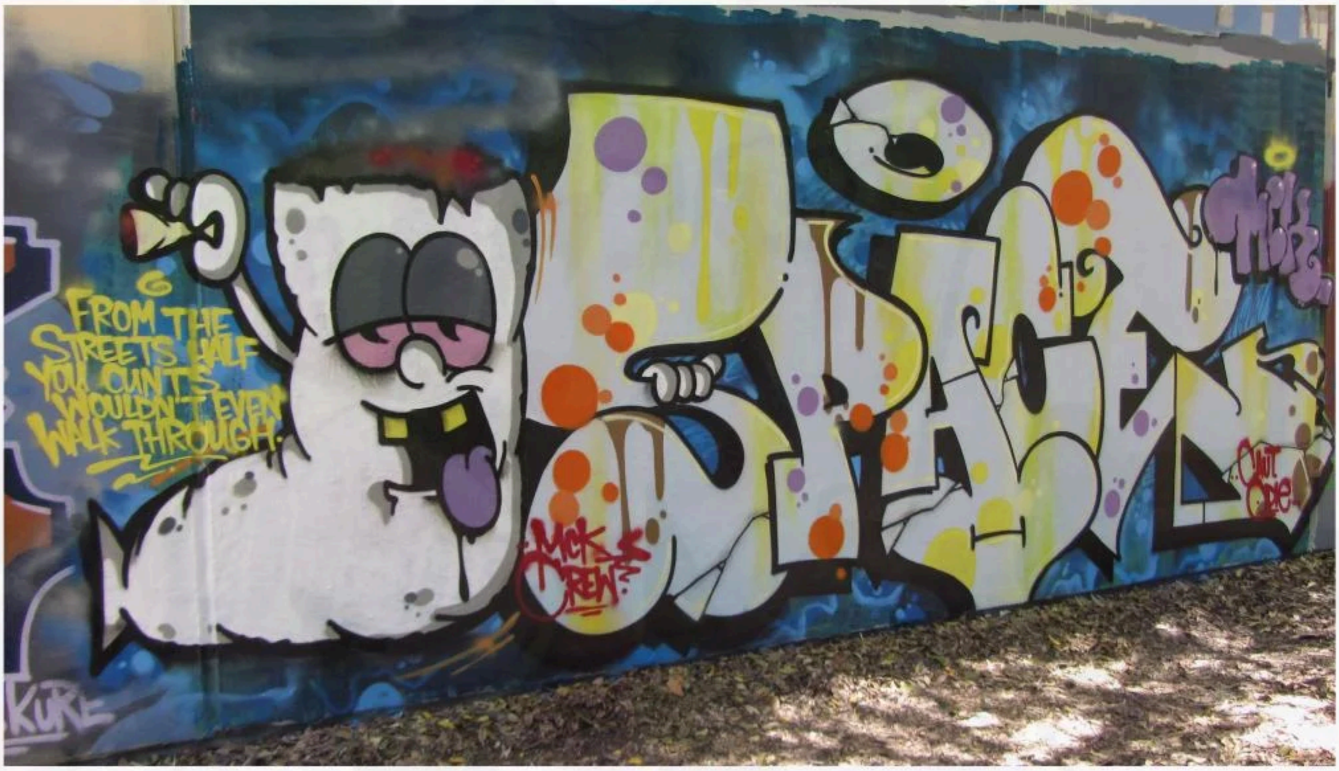
"STREET ART IS WHAT YOU DO IF YOU JUST CAN'T CUT IT IN THE GRAFFITI SCENE."


FROM THE STREETS HALF YOU CUNTS WOULDN'T EVEN WALK THROUGH.
MCK CREW
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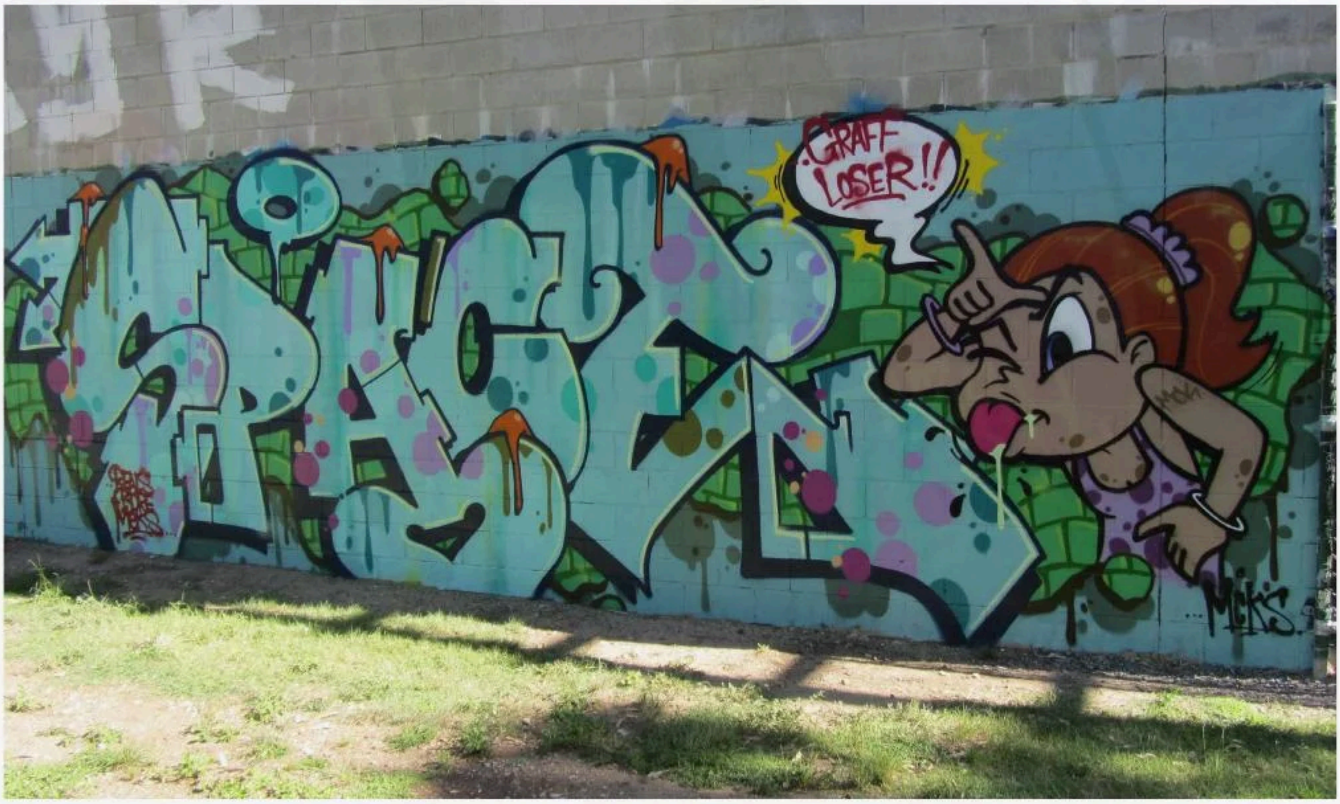

GRAFF LOSER!!
MCKS

SPACE: Melbourne is definitely the best city in Australia for graffiti - it's everywhere. The innercity suburbs are destroyed and there are lots of cool places to eat, drink and have fun.

BBB: If you could only choose one surface to paint for the rest of your career (trains, walls or trucks), which would choose and why?

SPACE: It would have to be trains. There is something about painting trains that's on another level from any other form of graffiti. It's hard to explain but anyone who has painted trains will know what I mean.

BBB: Whether it be through products, shows or commissions, what is your take on graffiti artists making money off of the craft?

SPACE: Every one gets their hustle on the best way they know how… If they're good at it - then good for them. But I think that if they've never started at street level then they're not a real writer, they're just an artist doing "graffiti style" artwork.

BBB: Many people uneducated in graffiti consider it street art, what would you say to someone that says graffiti is street art?

SPACE: Street art is what you do if you just can't cut it in the graffiti scene.

BBB: What would you say are the core differences between the two fields?

SPACE: In my opinion, street art is done for the people walking past it to look at, whereas graffiti is done for graffiti writers to look at.

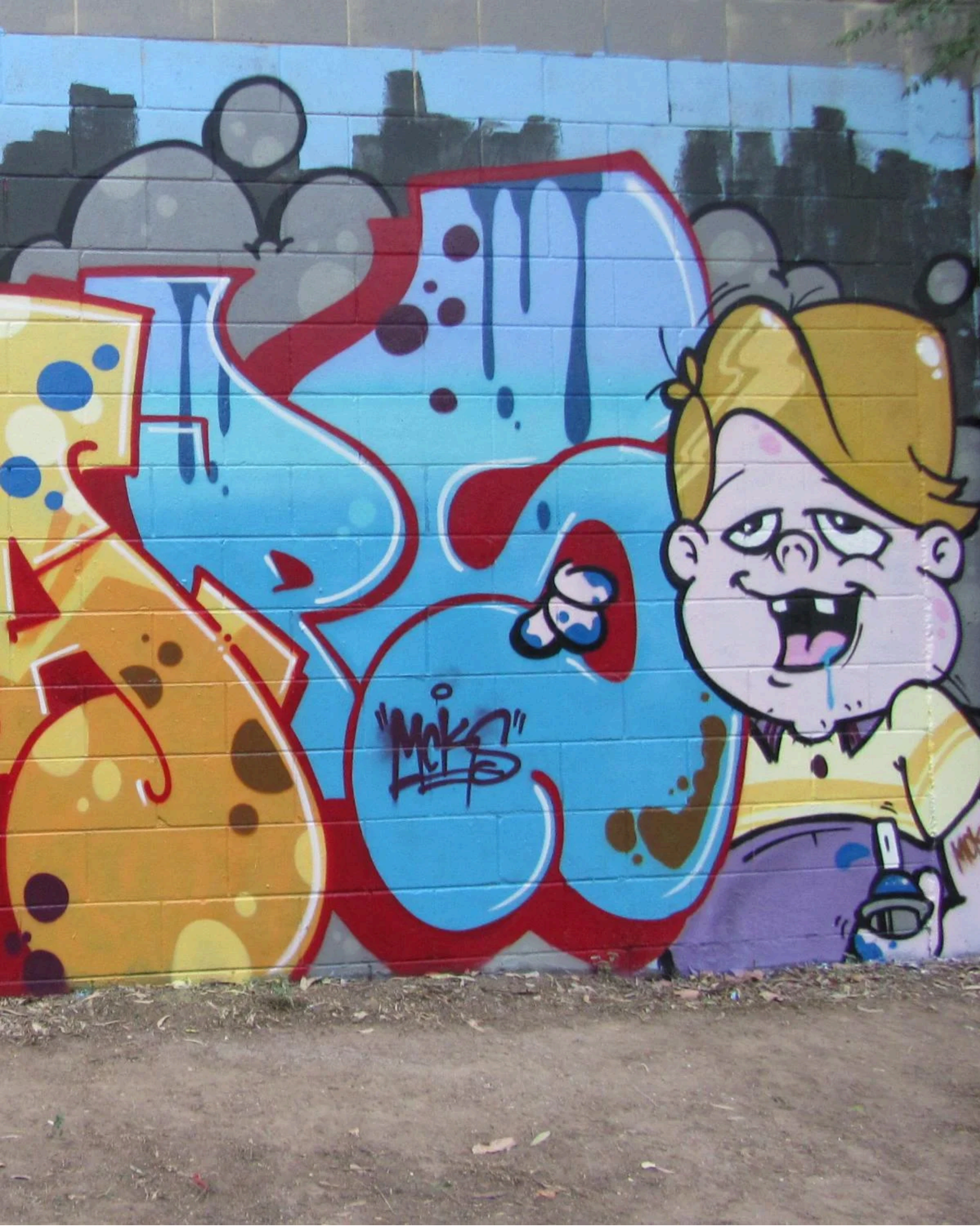
BBB: To send us off, what has been your favourite piece you've created and can you give a background about it?

SPACE: I couldn't say one in particular stands out, each piece has its own story - some good, some bad.

INSTAGRAM: @MADCROOK

FBK
EKAER
SN..CREW..
YOU BETTER RUN!!
TBES

"AIMS"
→ Ficus Ziggy


"Mcks"

HOACS

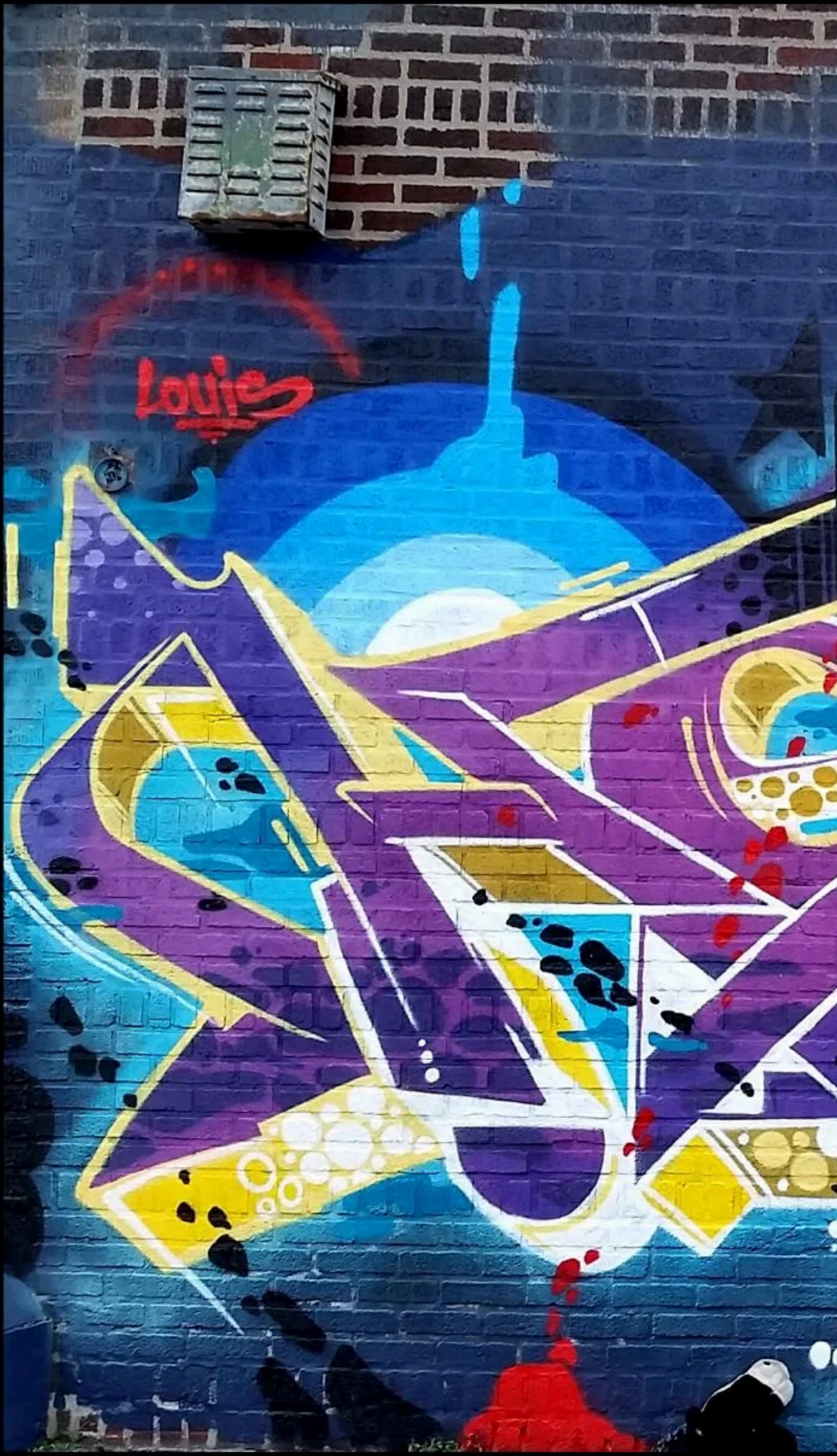
This Queens, NY native has been putting both himself and his borough on the map for about two decades and it seems like there's no signs of slowing down.

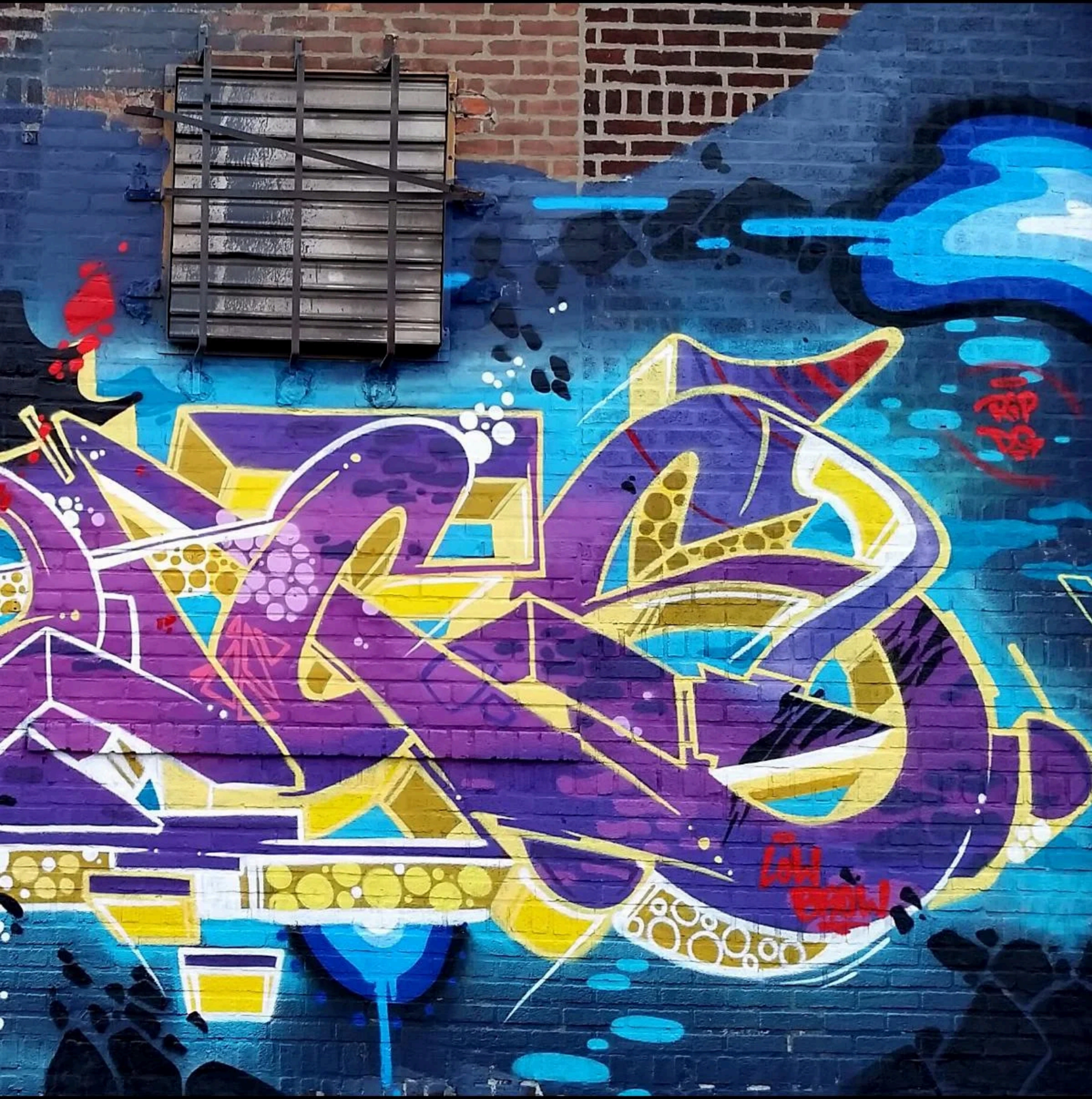
HOACS is one of those graffiti writers that has all aspects of the game completely on lock. From bombing to straight letters, pieces to wildstyles, the man can do it all with style.

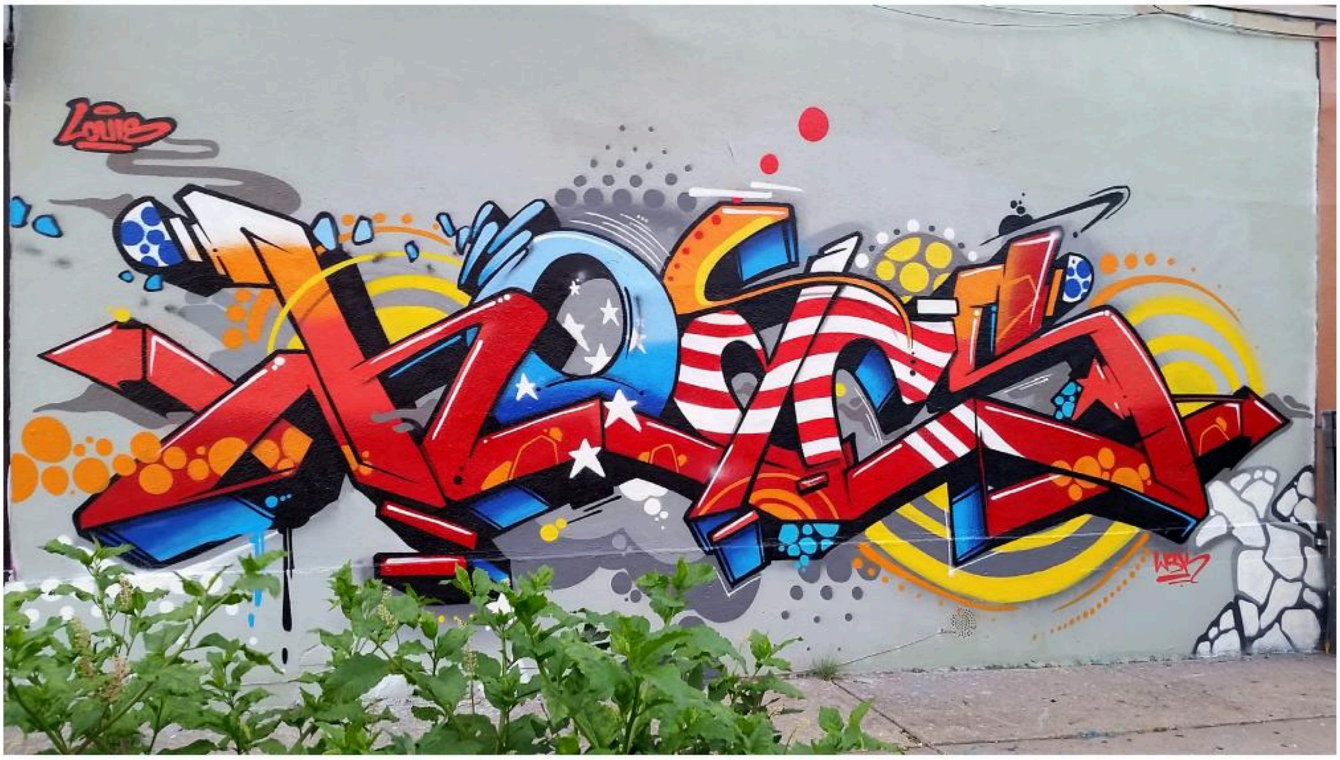
His big and bold letters have been catching the eye of graffiti writers and pedestrians alike and It's an absolute thrill for us to have him get involved and get a chance to showcase his art in our magazine.

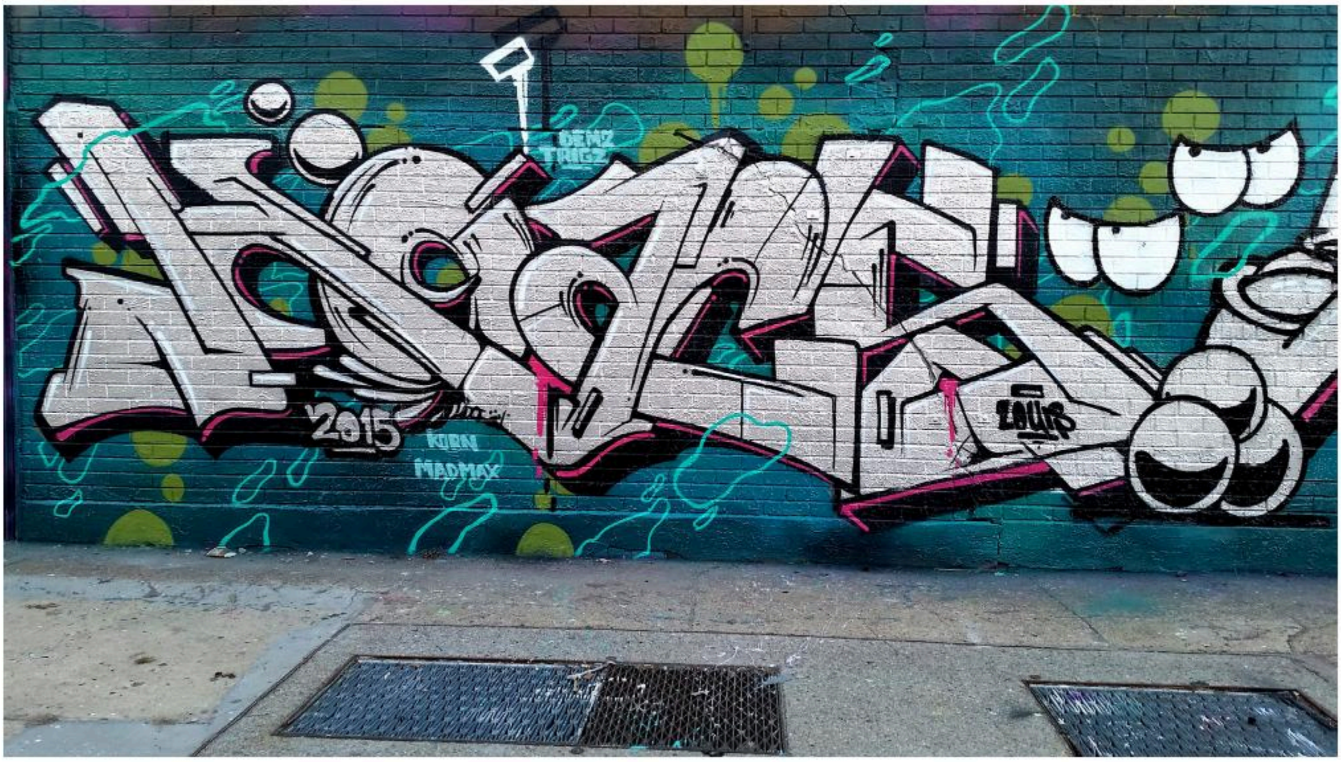
For now, we'll stop our rambling chit chat and let HOACS' work speak for itself, which it has been for years.

INSTAGRAM: @HOACS





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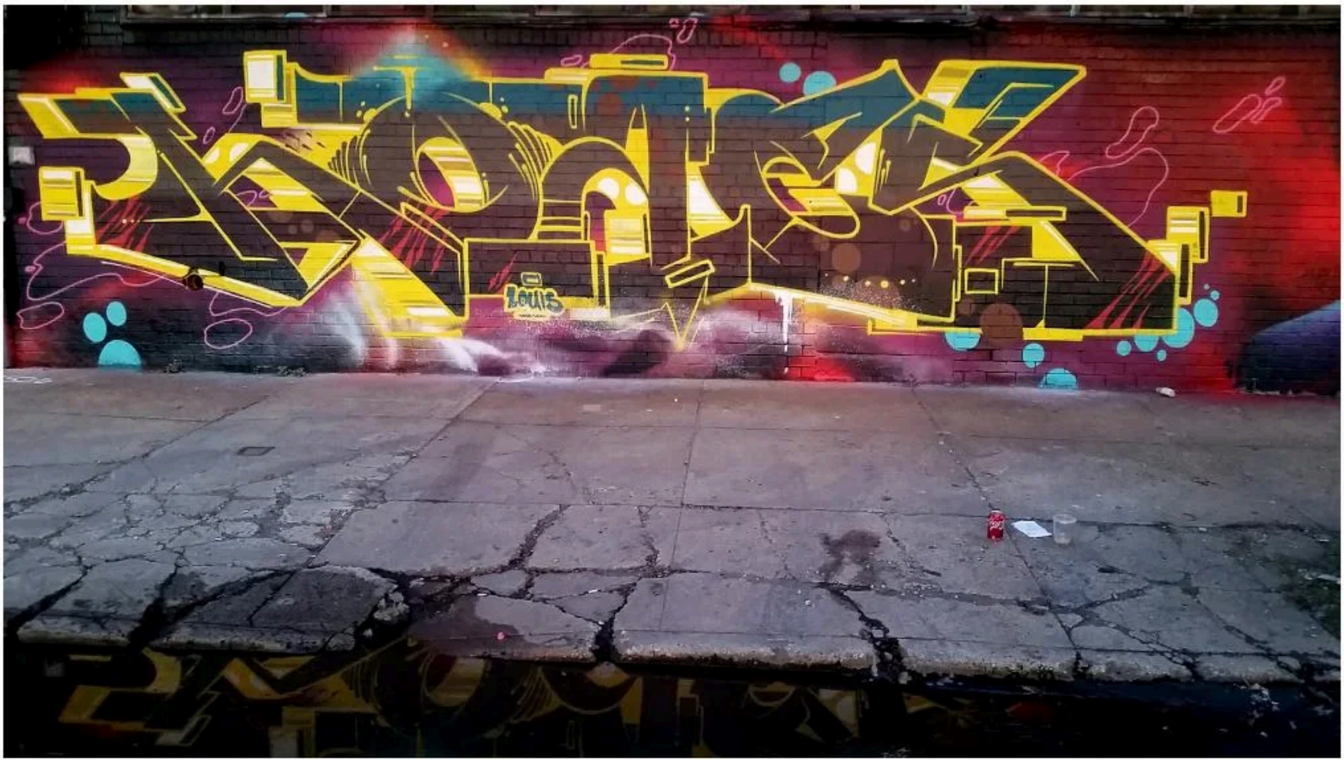
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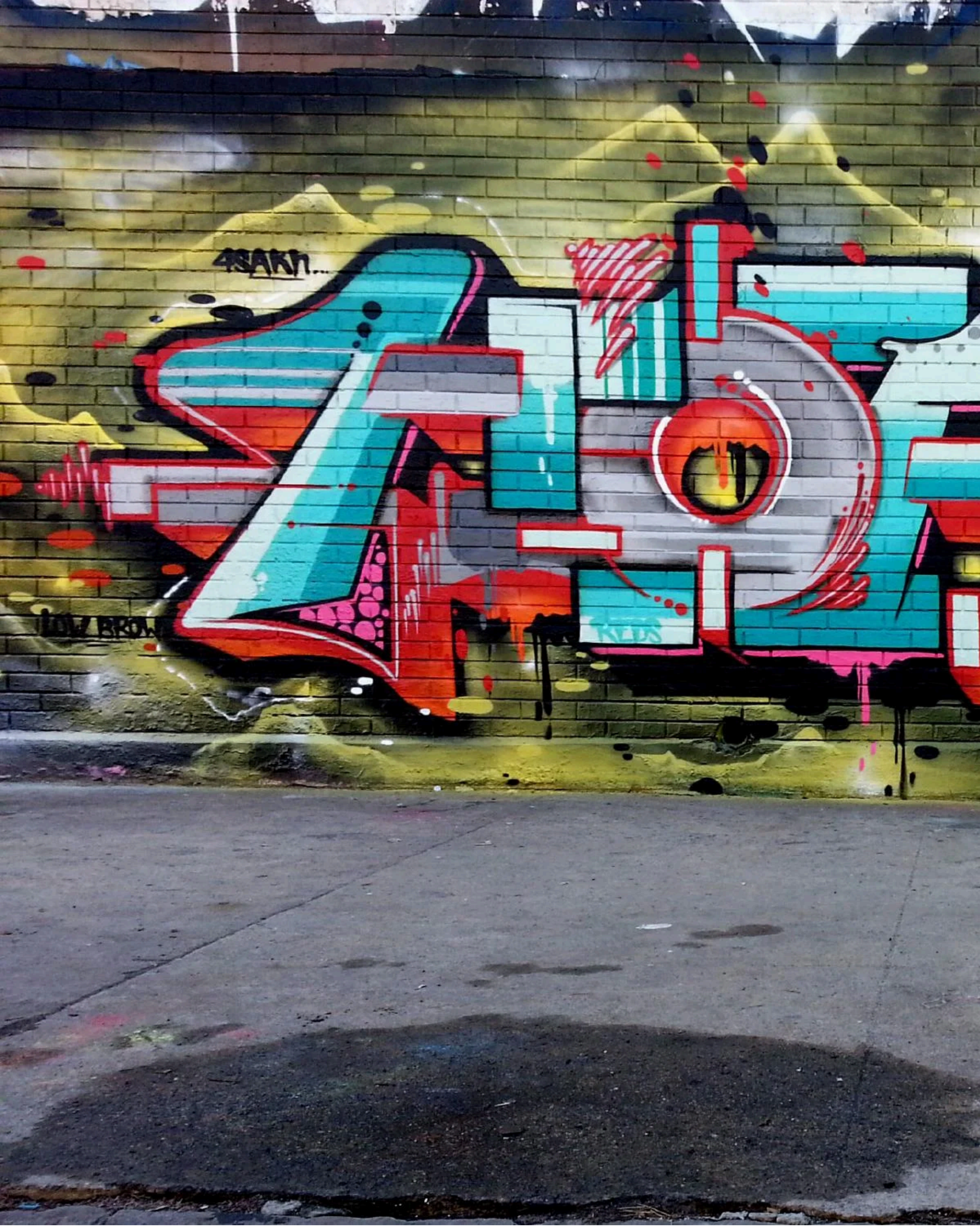
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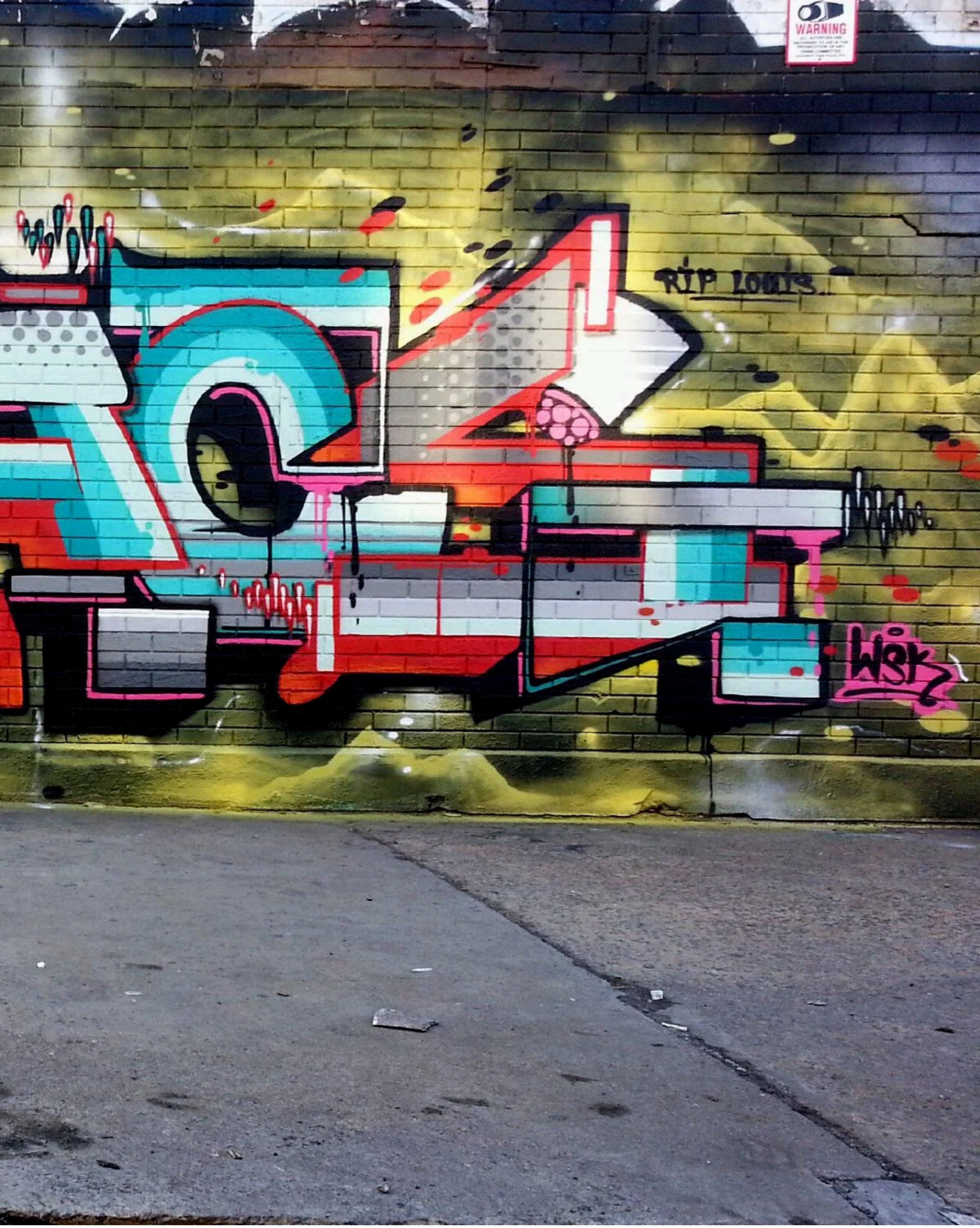
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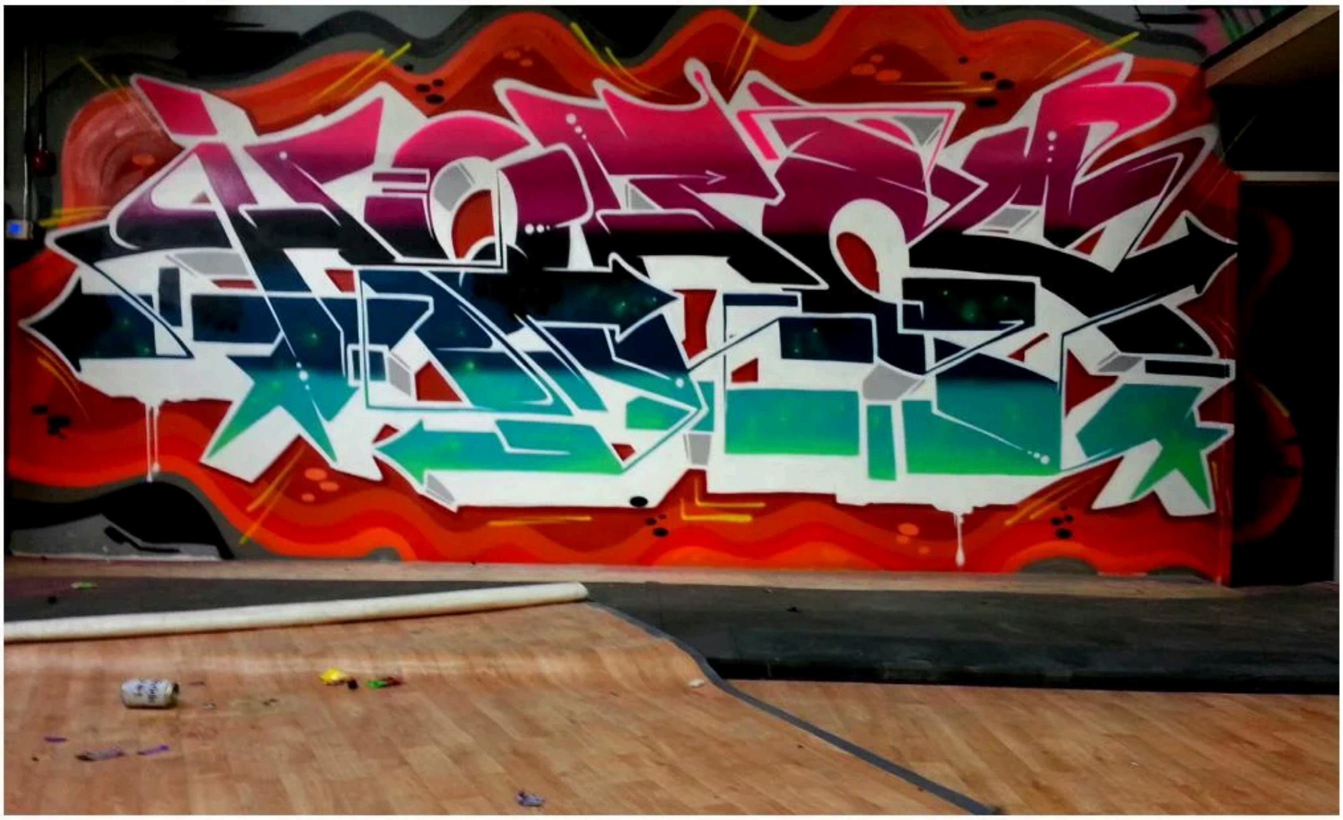

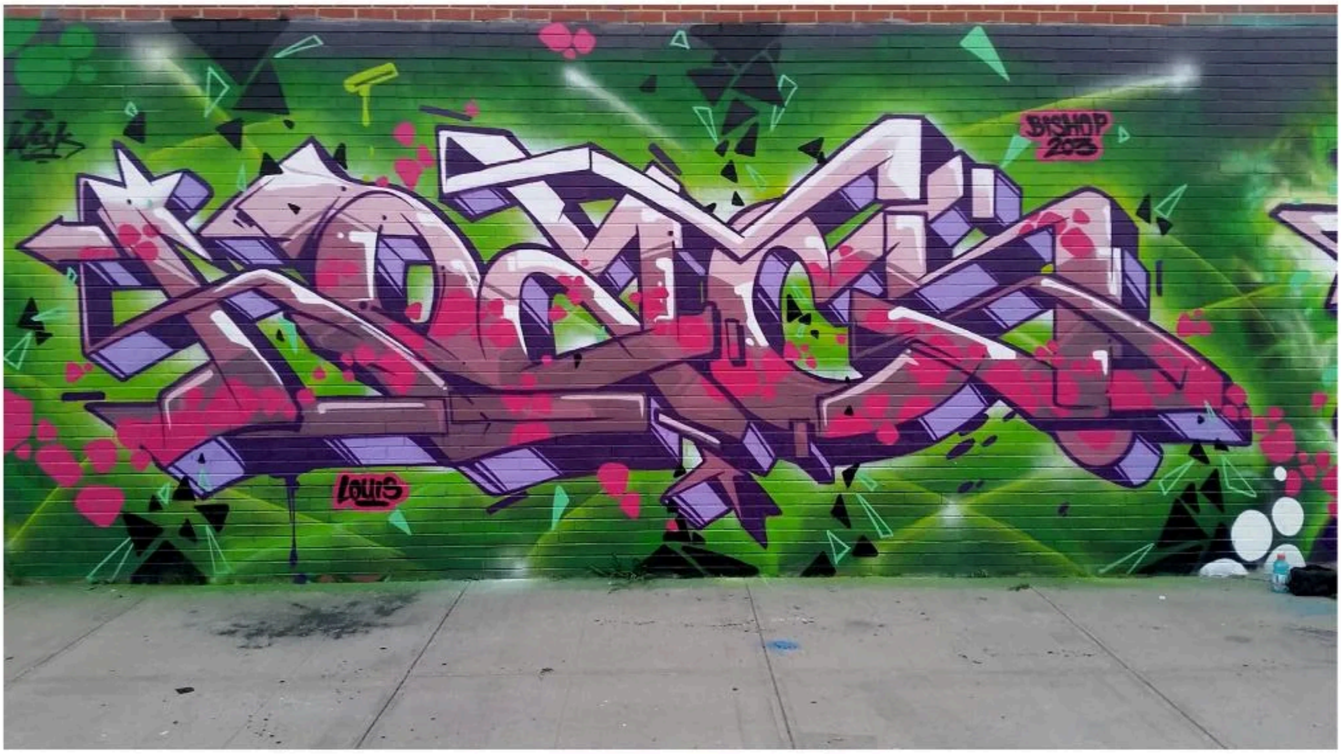
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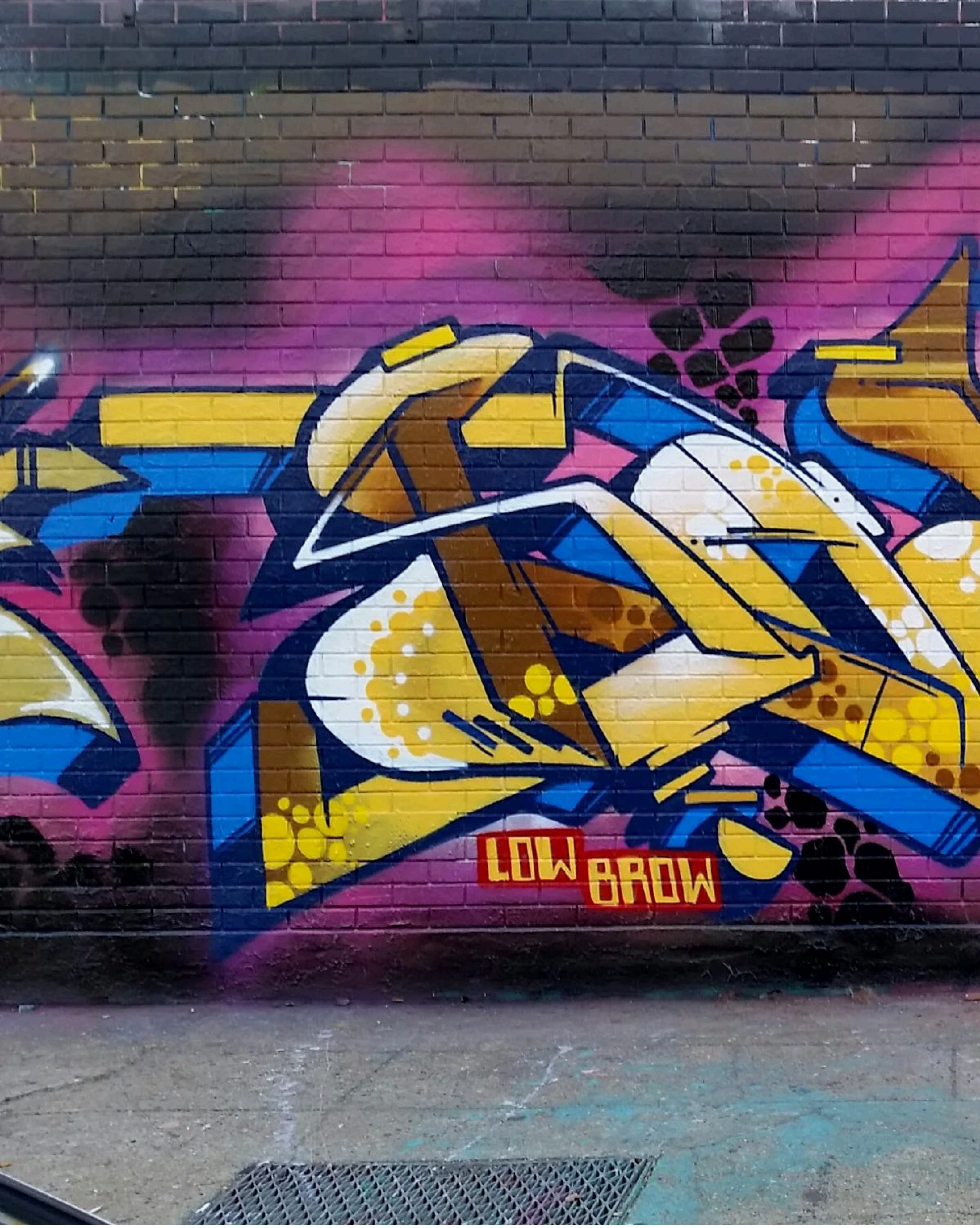
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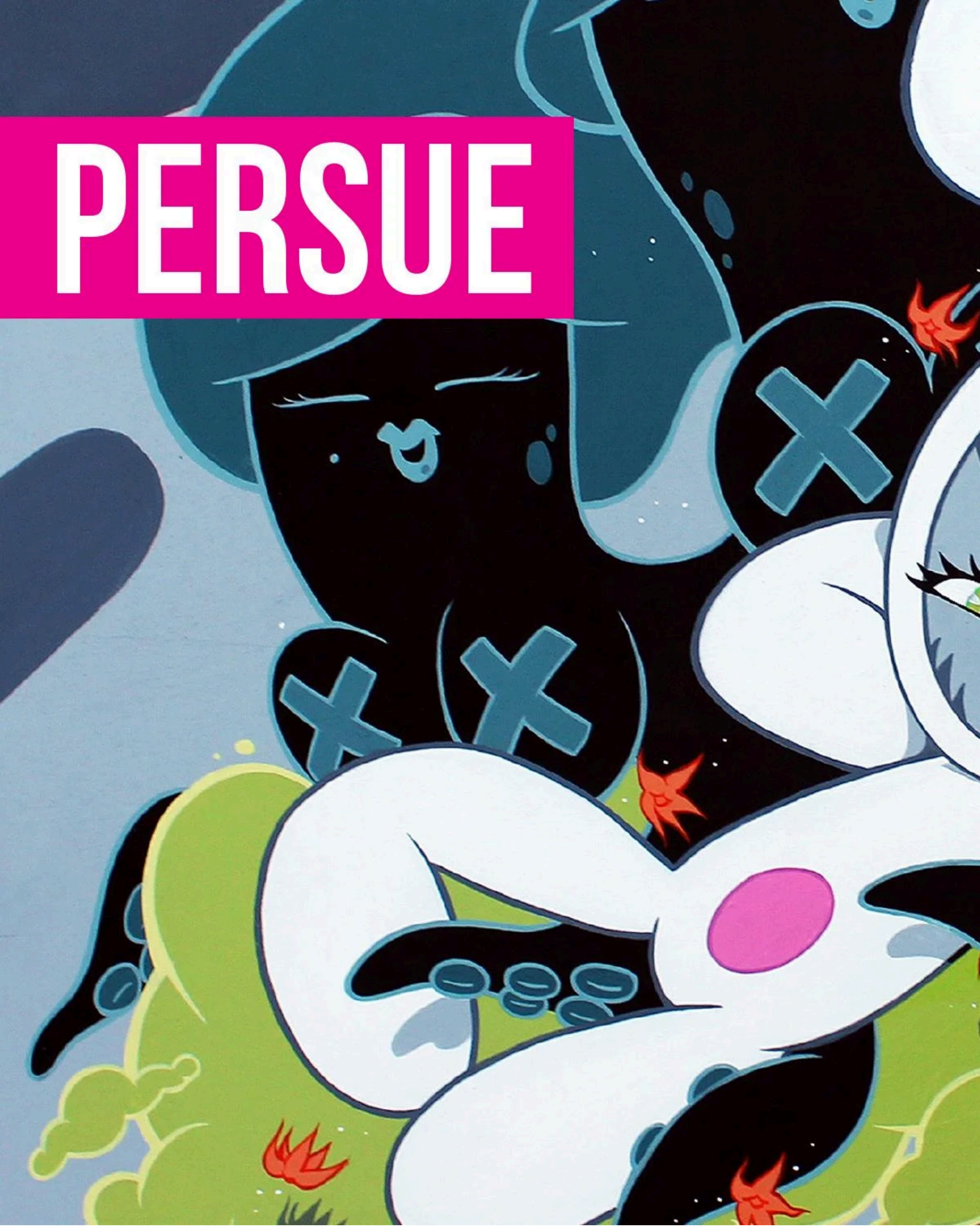


Bizarre Beyond Belief: Many children start off as artists or creating and when did you decide that the arts was going to be a career instead of a hobby?

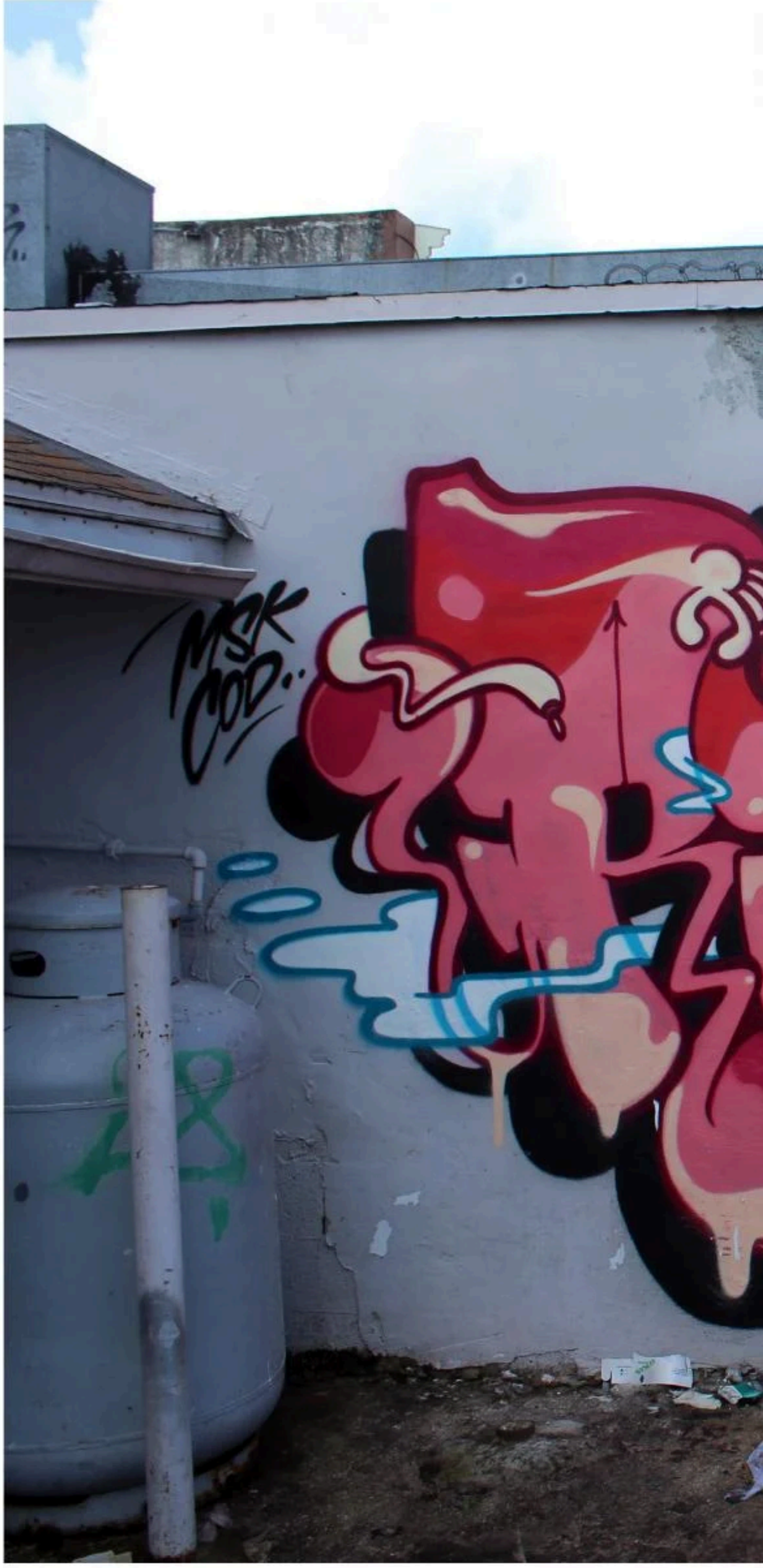
PERSUE: Firstly, I grew up in a very supportive family. My grandmother and mother knew I was an artist at an early age. I don't know how, maybe it was the subtle things I did with my drawings or the way I used my hands. They always said my work was very detailed, and that I was able to capture movement. They even defended me from teachers who told me to stop drawing on my homework. Secondly, I think it was predestined for me. I originally enlisted in the Navy with the intention to see the world. I even asked the recruiter if there was an art department... So naive! But it wasn't meant to be, I was discovered painting at a skate shop in a small suburb outside of San Diego. The owner of the store asked if I would be interested in designing t-shirt graphics for his friends company. That T-shirt company was called Eightball. I submitted my first t-shirt graphic drawn on a Subway sandwich napkin. It did so well, they asked me for more graphics and eventually hired me. I was 19 and the year was 1992. I helped them establish brand direction for all of their future projects including Droors, Dub and DC shoes.

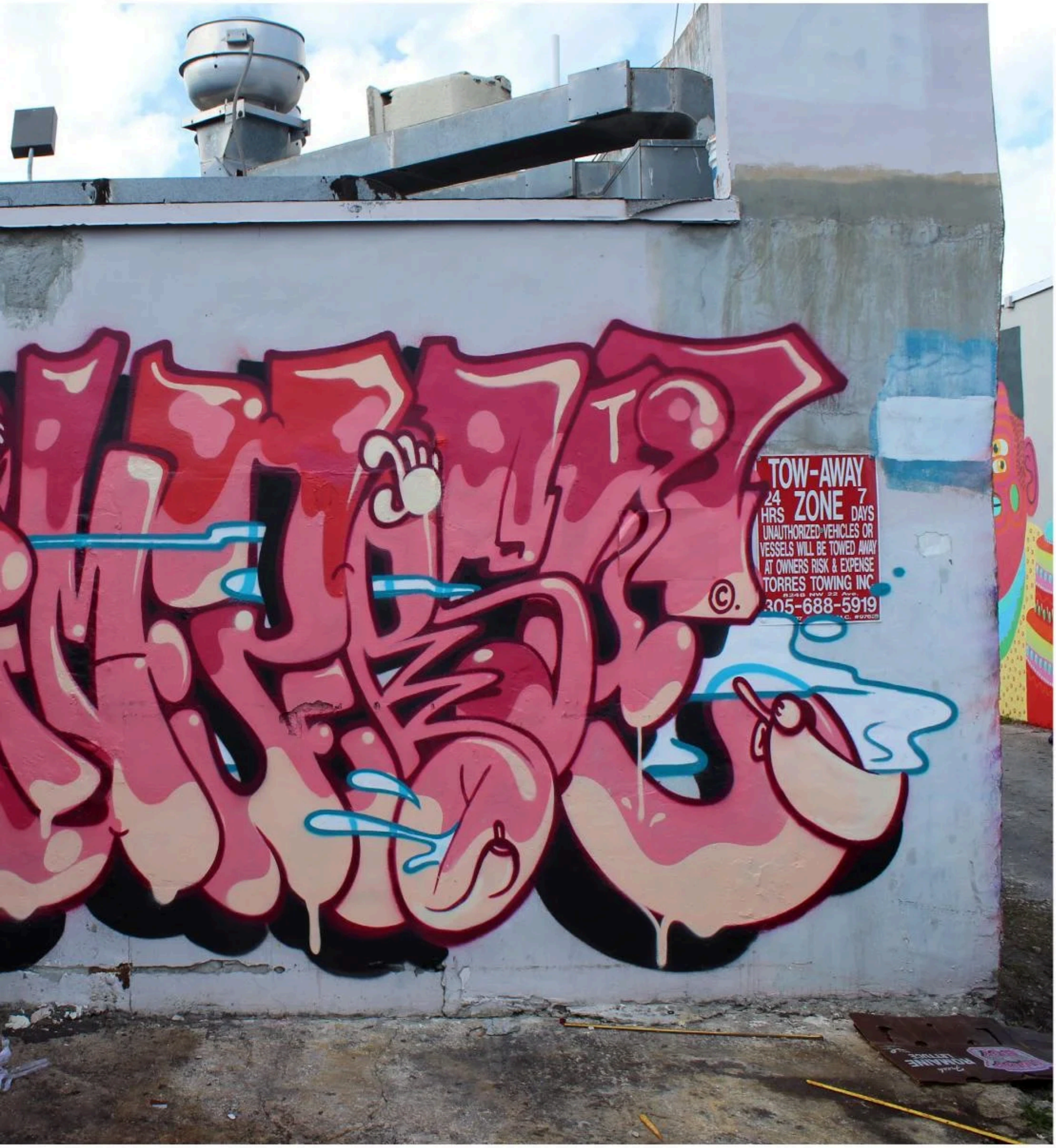
BBB: We've read you got into graffiti in the late 80s, what sparked your fascination of the culture to begin painting?

PERSUE: Timing. Around the same time I met a new kid at school, I was watching a lot of gangster movies and interested in the cholo style writing around San Diego. You could see on his face that he wanted to be asked what was in his book, so I asked. He corrected me and called it his Bible. When he opened it up, I saw it was filled with sick futuristic letter styles. I had never seen anything like it. I geeked out on it. The writing culture was super small then and "Street-art" was a sperm in Graffiti's nut sack. It was art, and it was competitive: two of my favorite things.

BBB: How would you describe what the scene was like in your city at the time?

PERSUE: Vibrant! Lots of bombers and future kings developing their styles. But that came to a screeching halt when a sting operation wiped out over a hundred writers, which was a lot for a small city like San Diego.

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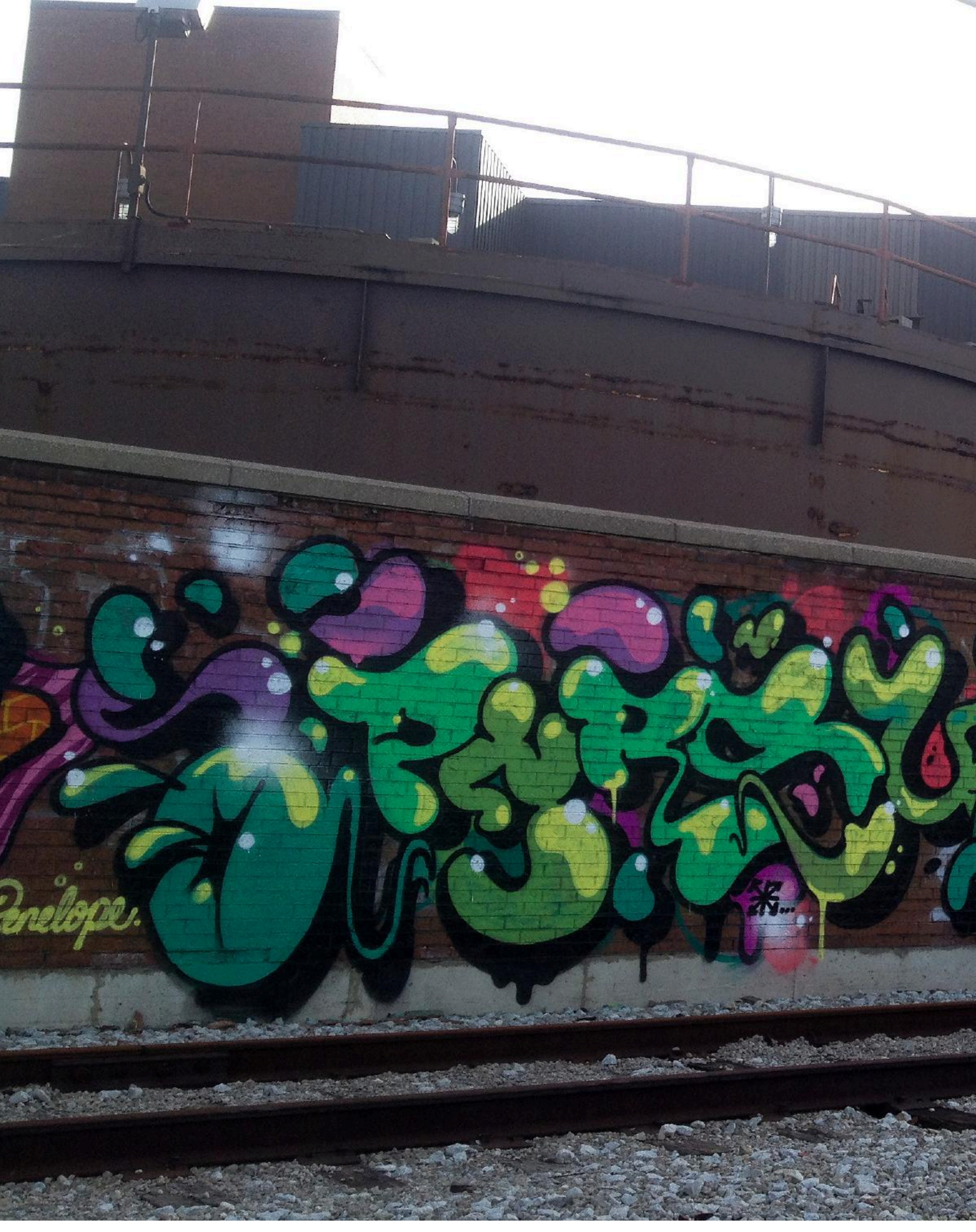

Penelope.

PEACE
WINDSOR

The B-Boy summit was a big draw in the early 90's. That would bring an international Hip Hop audience to the city. The late 90's scene in San Diego was dead. Some OG crews were around but the Kings stopped teaching the younger generation, wanting to keep their techniques a secret. I was the last writer to be mentored by Quasar, who was a San Diego legend and in my book one of the most talented graffiti artists to live in this city.

BBB: Nearly 30 years later, how have you seen the graffiti community develop and transform since you began?

PERSUE: It is way more of an international scene now. When I was traveling through Asia in the early 2000's, they hadn't caught the bug yet. Now it is in full force. I like meeting youngsters that take pride in the heritage of writing. You know…doing their homework. It's important. I guess i've seen the introduction of "Street-Art." I like some of the artists that have made a name for themselves. But for me, it's not the same as graffiti writing, it's a different language. I notice a lot of "Street artists" don't pay homage to the pioneers of graffiti, who were some of the the first to put art in the streets using spray paint as a medium.

BBB: Considering technology has played such an important role since then, where do you think it will go in the next 30 years?

PERSUE: Hopefully the internet is dead. No more instant fame. I think it's important to work for it. I traveled through Europe pre-internet and did just fine meeting artists and painting spots.

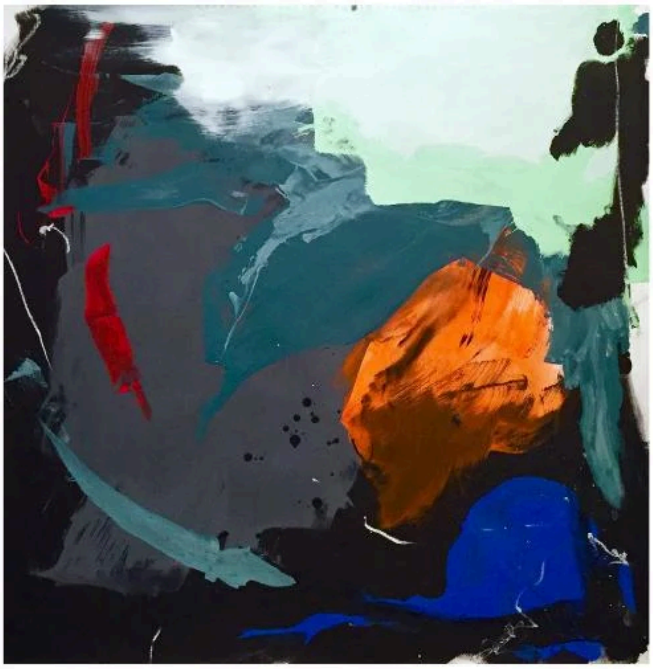
BBB: As someone who was involved with the skateboarding community at the same time, how do you feel that shaped your development as an artist?

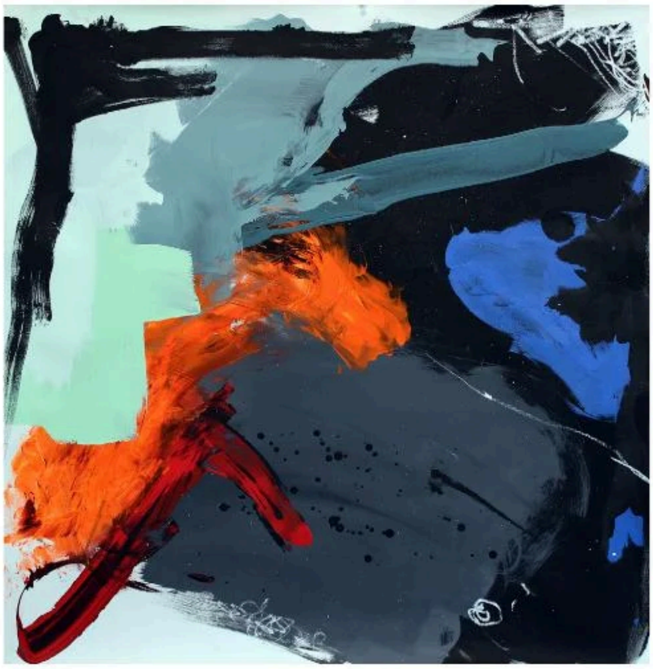
PERSUE: It made me more refined. In the sense of starting something and seeing it all the way through. Plus it was like being a teenager though my 20s and 30s.

BBB: What would you say some of the similarities and some of the differences are between the two cultures?

PERSUE: There is a saying in skateboarding "If you don't skate, you don't relate." It's the same in the writing culture. The differences between the two is that skate companies pay salaries and endorse their pros…this hasn't really happened in graffiti. Maybe because art is so subjective.

BBB: Did you ever think during your original concept for BunnyKitty that it would become such an iconic character





CHAOS TRA

“I NOTICE A LOT OF “STREET ARTISTS” DON’T PAY HOMAGE TO THE PIONEERS OF GRAFFITI...”

in graffiti and street art?

PERSUE: I came up with the original concept of Bunny Kitty in 2001. I wanted to create something out of my sub-culture that would be looked at as positive. Every thing connected to graffiti in the media at that time was negative, and I wanted to change that. I figured I could get it noticed if i put as much energy into BK as I did all my other projects. It took me years to refine the drawings of the characters. I went through a huge life changing experience in 2010, and took a break for a year or two. But I'm back at it. I have a lot of great BK projects. I am finally releasing the story of Bunny Kitty in book form through 1xRUN in 2015….Big things for BK and her fans!

BBB: After the creation of BunnyKitty, you added more layers and levels to its world, how has your original concept developed over the years?

PERSUE: I am excited for people to discover her world. I am pretty much living the first book. Lately, I've been showing the darker side of BunnyKitty's world in my recent work. 'The Origins of BunnyKitty' was written with my Mom in 2004, but wasn't released until recently at my last two art shows. The story gives so much more meaning to the character. Especially with my mom's development of Alzheimer's. I read the story to her last week, and told me she remembers writing the story with me. That felt good.

BBB: You often work with your brother's band the Slugganauts, can you describe what goes into a collaboration there?

PERSUE: I have always been a huge music fan. My brother Peter Summit has been a singer and song writer for years. It was my opportunity to work with him and work in a medium I love. The visual production of a band. I thought it would be fun to have this element in my

Bunny Kitty story. So for years we have collaborated with the Slugganauts. In the story the Sluggaanuts is Bunny Kitty's favorite band. She has a crush on the guitarist. They have played live a few times. You can find the video from 2010 on youtube. We will release Slugganaut music sometime in 2015.

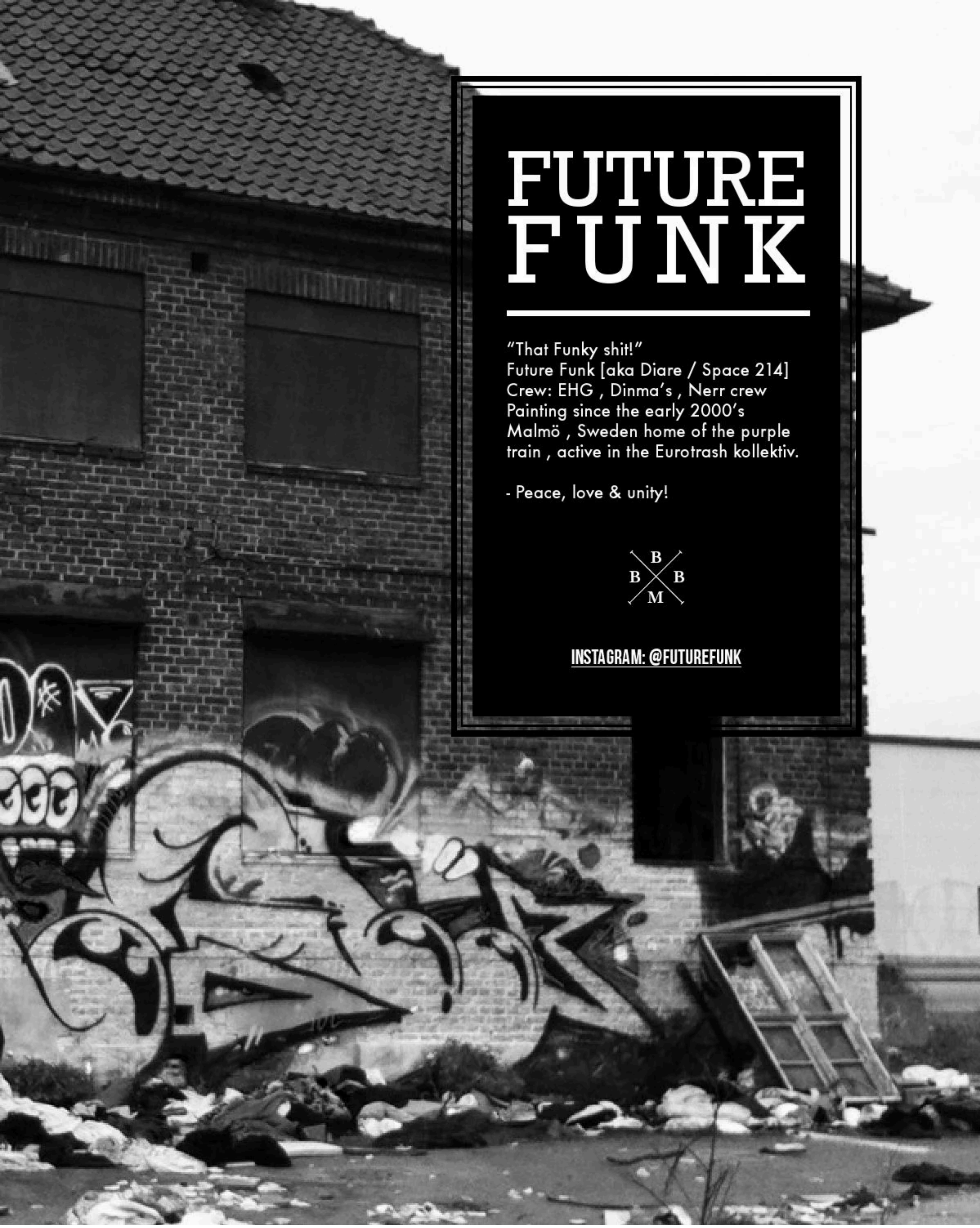
BBB: How does working with other artists in both same and different mediums affect your creative approach?

I think it depends on what medium we are working with. It depends on communication in the vocal and non-vocal sense as well. Playing off each others energy… it's something that comes pretty natural to creative types. Sometimes the outcome is awesome and sometimes its not. Thats the beauty of it. Not knowing. The fun part is the trip you take in your mind during the development of the project that makes it fun. Most of the time.

BBB: With nearly 30 years of graffiti under your belt and many more in various industries, where does PERSUE see in another 30 years?

In 30 years I will be 72! What ever it is I hope it doesn't involve changing my diaper.

WWW.PERSUE.BIGCARTEL.COM



FUTURE FUNK

"That Funky shit!"
Future Funk [aka Diare / Space 214]
Crew: EHG , Dinma's , Nerr crew
Painting since the early 2000's
Malmö , Sweden home of the purple
train , active in the Eurotrash kollektiv.

- Peace, love & unity!

INSTAGRAM: @FUTUREFUNK

ONES
Ägare/ Registration:
Green Cargo AB
Fax: +4687917221
www.greencargo.com
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Pagatagen

City
MAGIC
THEO
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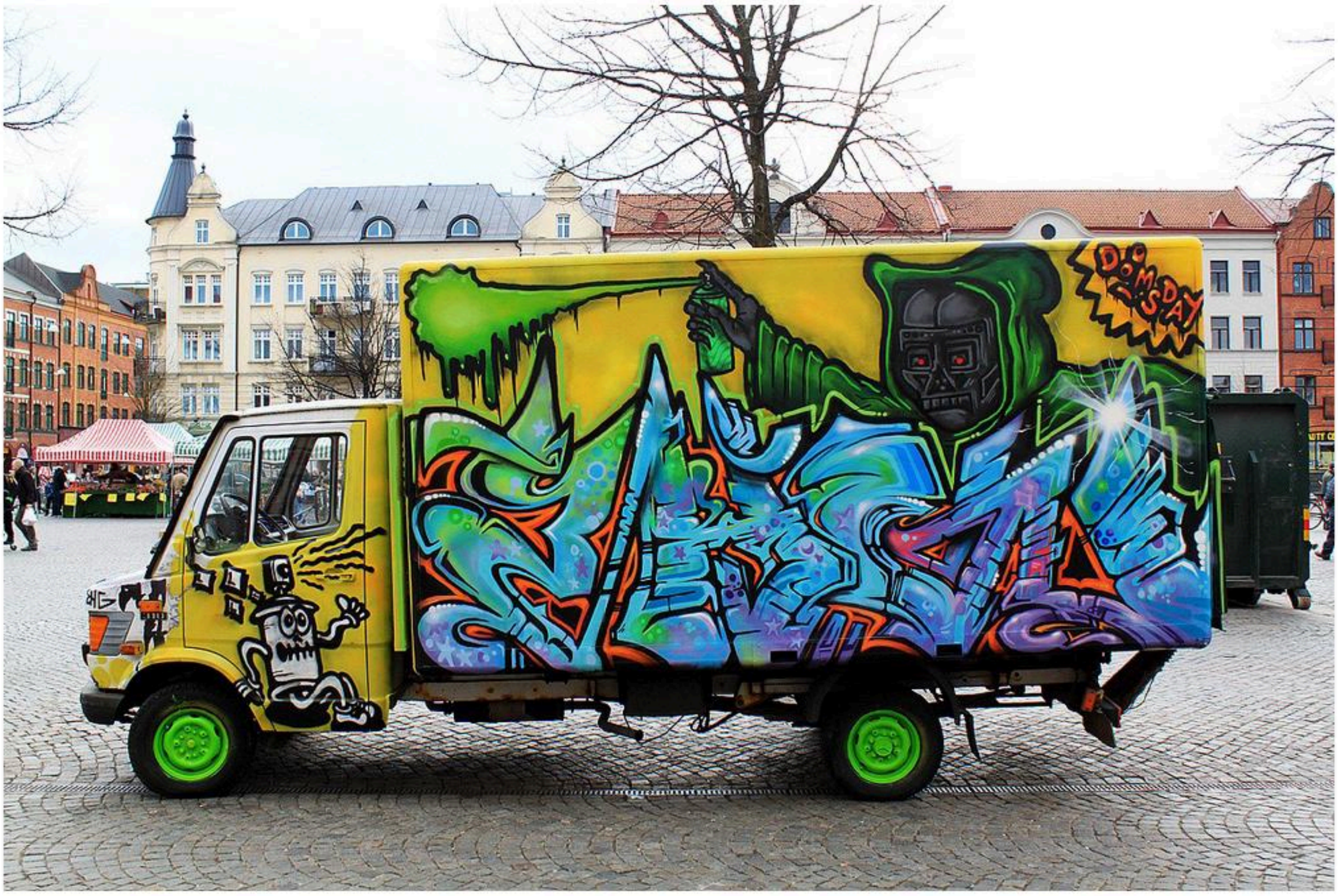

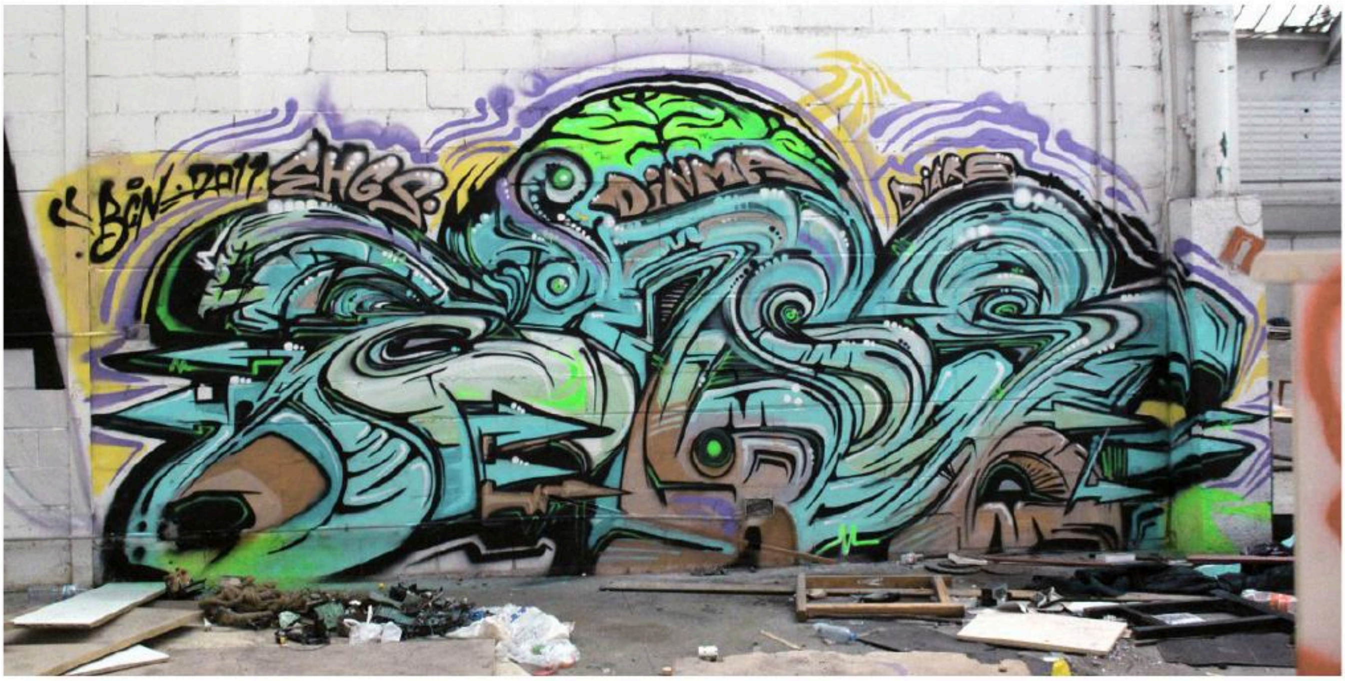

DURE!

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TMT

CES

Bizarre Beyond Beilef: You started painting graffiti in the early 80s, what was your first interaction with the culture and what fascinated you the most about it?

CES: My first interaction was from a childhood friend who wrote. He'd show me his artwork and he'd always have these crazy markers in his jacket pocket. Through him, I met other writers and I kept broadening from there.

BBB: How would you describe the graffiti landscape in your hometown at that time?

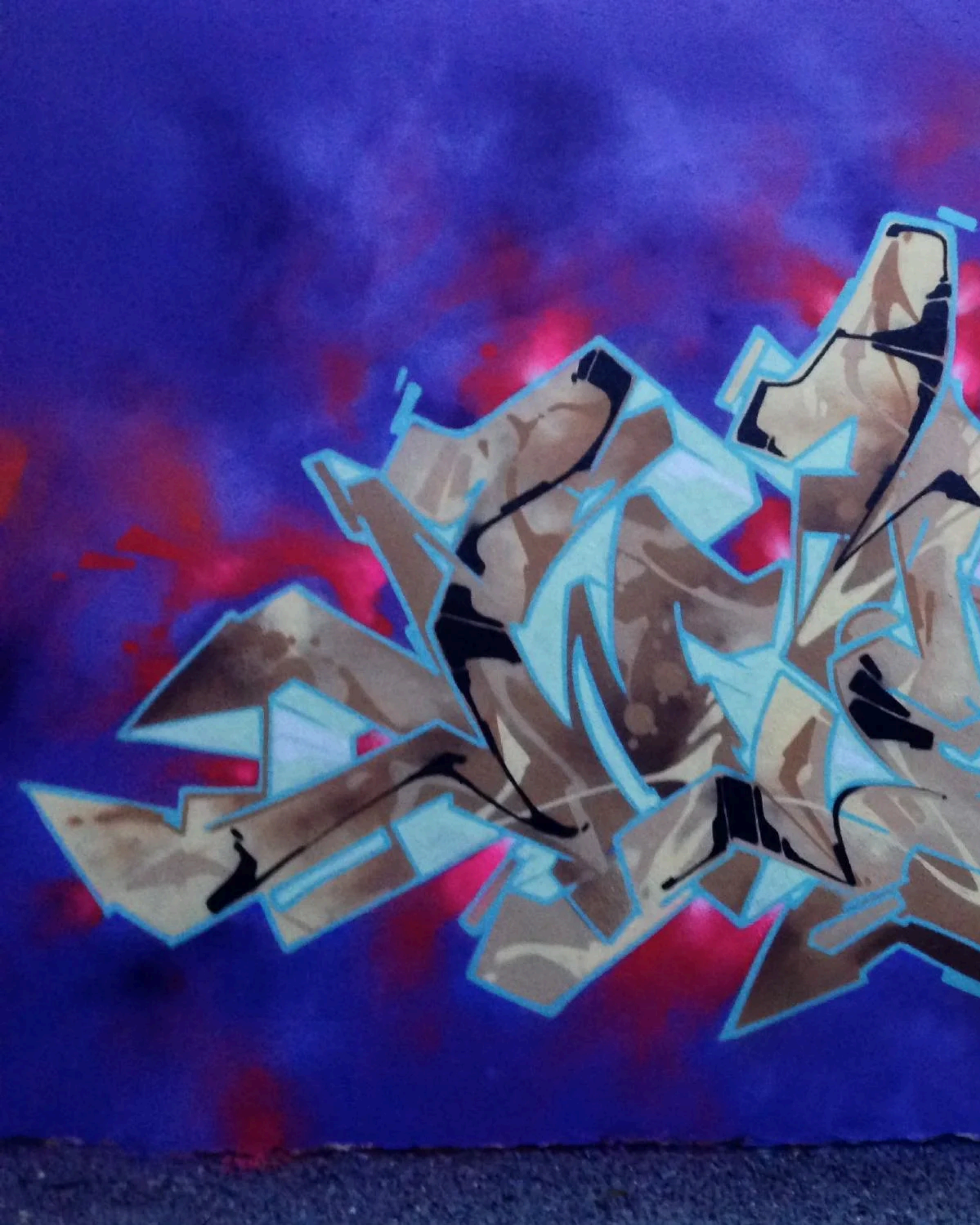
CES: The landscape was nothing like it is now, it was very underground. Graffiti wasn't public, it was done up on rooftops and behind buildings. And there weren't any graffiti stores or magazines in 1983.

BBB: This was far before the internet came to prominence, how would you say graffiti was affected by the web?

CES: Graffiti was affected by the web because it gave people a greater access to see what they normally wouldn't otherwise. You can see a piece that someone from Australia did just an hour ago, the streams of information are endless.

BBB: Many people now use the Internet to get their aesthetic, how would you describe the development of styles when you first began?

CES: When I first began, it was mostly through actually seeing the piece or the burner in person and through black books. That's all there was.



TMT

CES
BOOM BOOM BOOM
CES
2013
CES!

BBB: New York is known as the Mecca of graffiti, do you feel that it still holds that esteem today?

CES: On some levels, yes, and of course more partial because I'm from here, but I can appreciate what other countries and cities bring. The whole culture has grown, it doesn't necessarily mean just NYC. But majority of writers from all over the world would still make the pilgrimage to New York to paint - there's just so much history.

BBB: Graffiti is also to be said one of the elements of hip-

hop, do you feel this is true or it was just attributed to it as it came up at the same time?

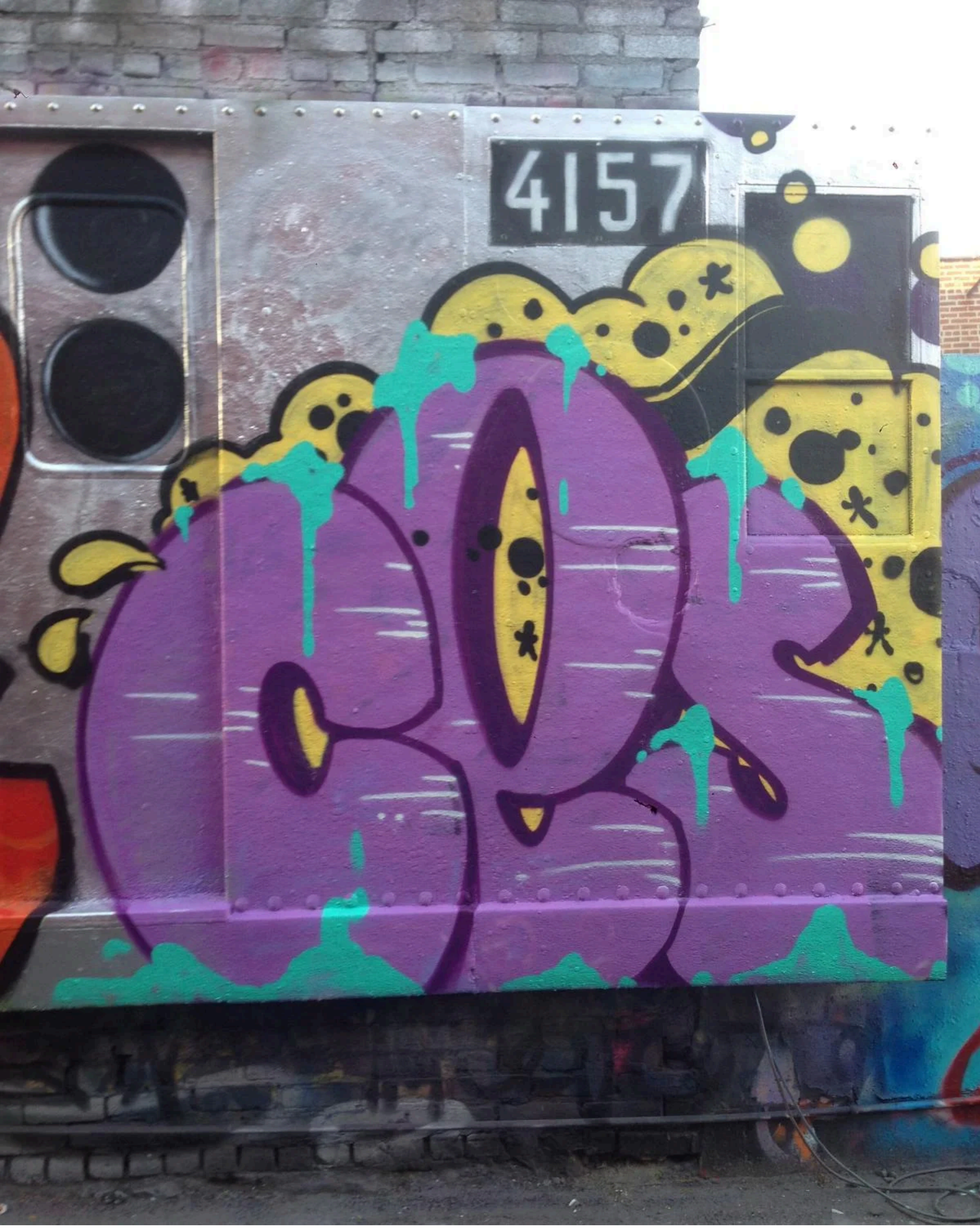
CES: I kind of did come up with it on that level, but I was more into rock. A lot of kids I hung around with listened to hip -hop though, they were always fresh. Graffiti and hip-hop definitely went hand in hand but you didn't necessarily need to listen to hip- hop to write.

BBB: Graffiti artists now are displaying work in galleries more than ever, do you feel street cred is affected when showing in galleries?

CES: Street cred was and still is important. But when you've been doing this for the past thirty years or more, these guys who are known to have tons of documented works, if they aren't STILL street bombing, we already know who they are.

BBB: You are also a co-owner of Tuff City Styles, what is the concept behind this company and how did it start?

CES: Tuff City is owned by my brother MED, who introduced me to tattooing almost 20 years ago. Along with MED, YES2 and Rob SOD; we were graffiti writers who started tattooing and it just grew from our love of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“TATTOOING IS MY LIVELIHOOD, BUT GRAFFITI IS MY LIFE.”

graffiti to where we are today.

BBB: You also work in tattooing, how does your approach to skin differ from your approach to a burner or going out bombing?

CES: Tattooing is my livelihood, but graffiti is my life.

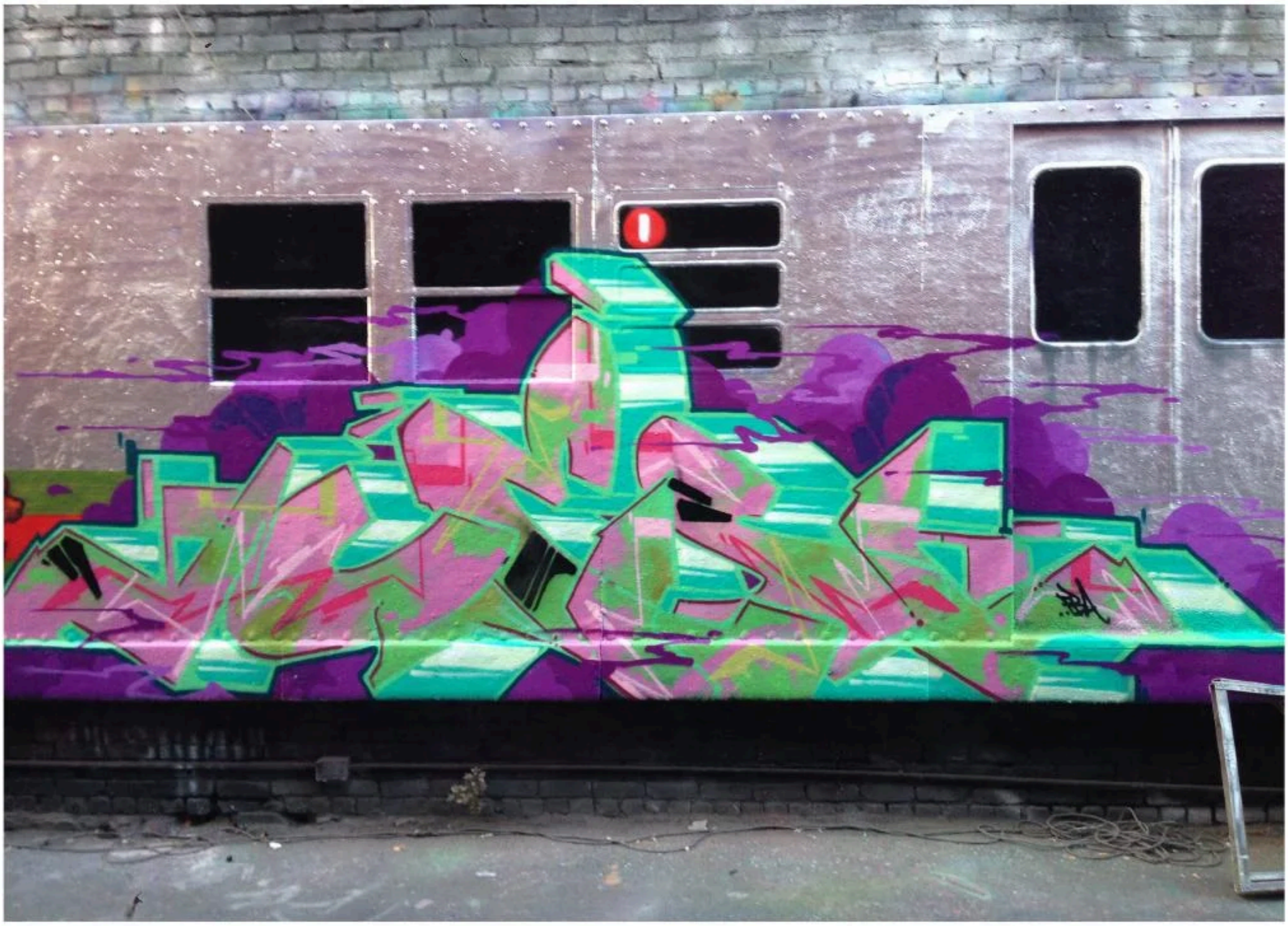
BBB: What are three things outside of graffiti that you absolutely can't like without?

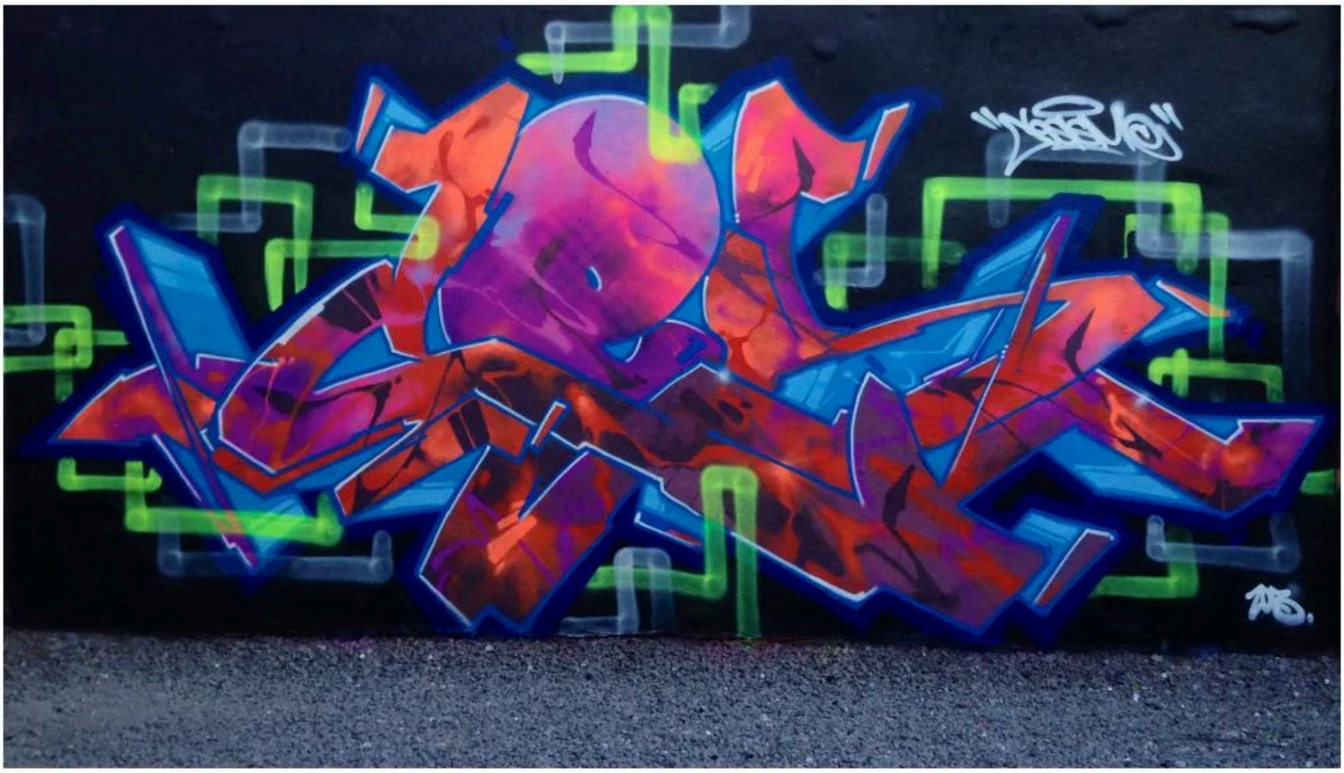
CES: Good food, good music, good sex.

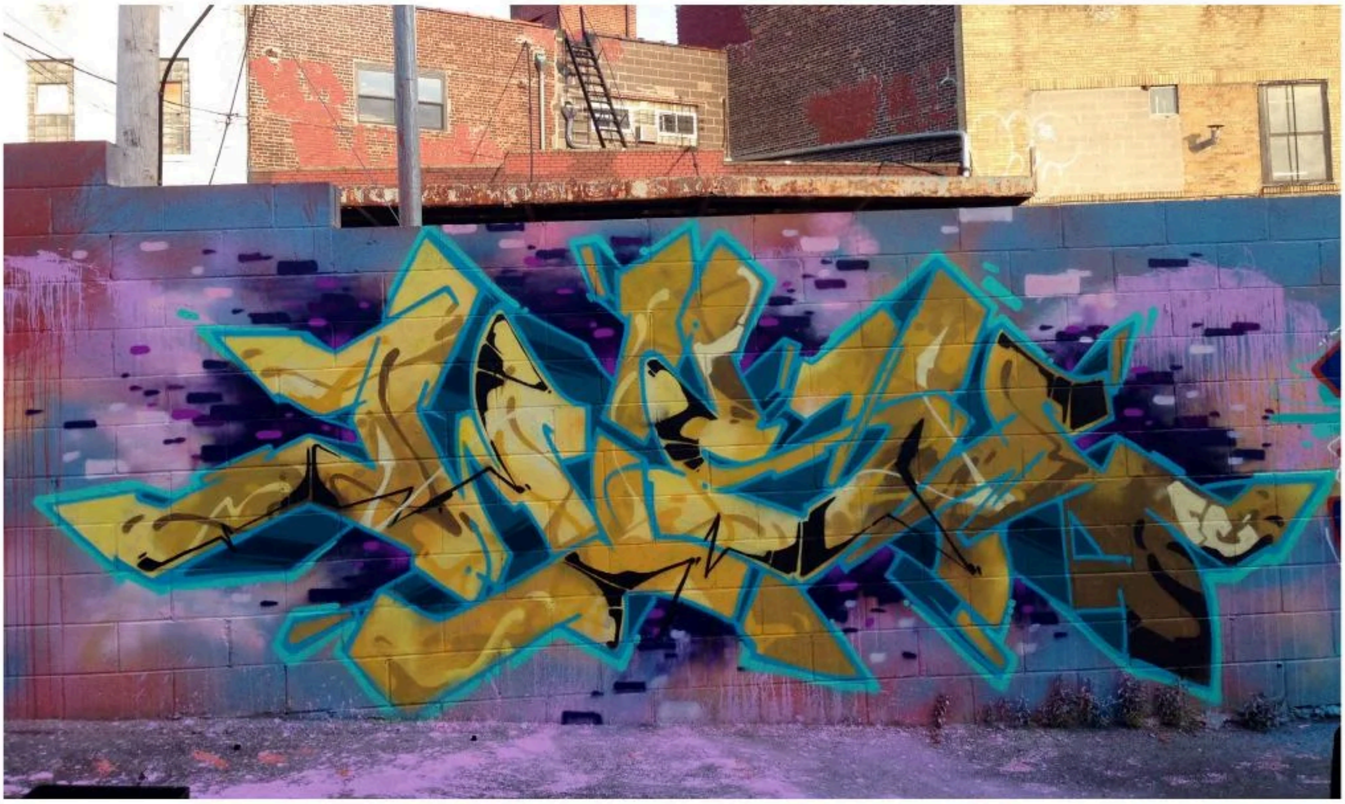
BBB: With many decades of success in the craft behind you, where do you see yourself at the end of the decade?

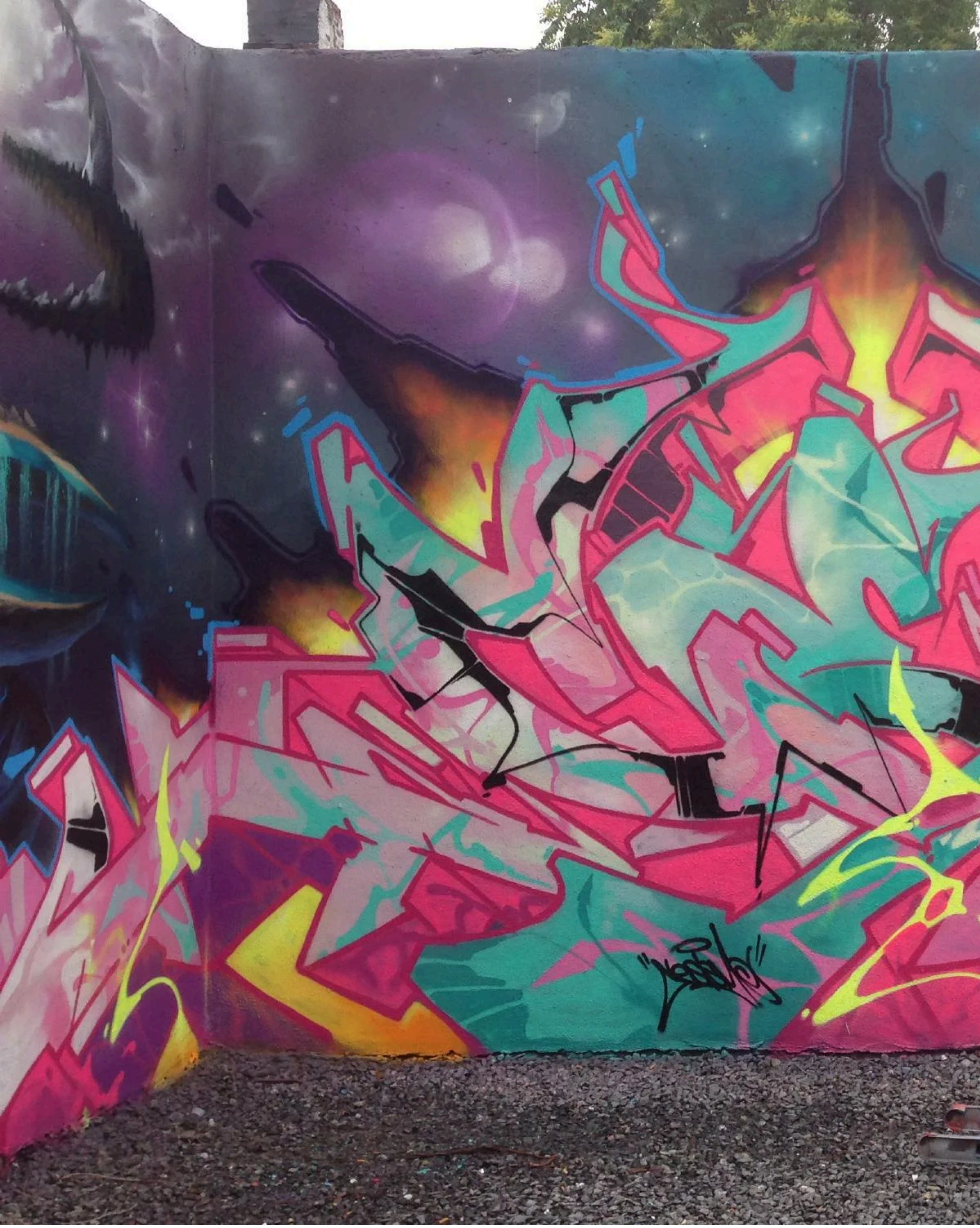
CES: I'm just happy to be alive today (I didn't even think I'd make it this far).

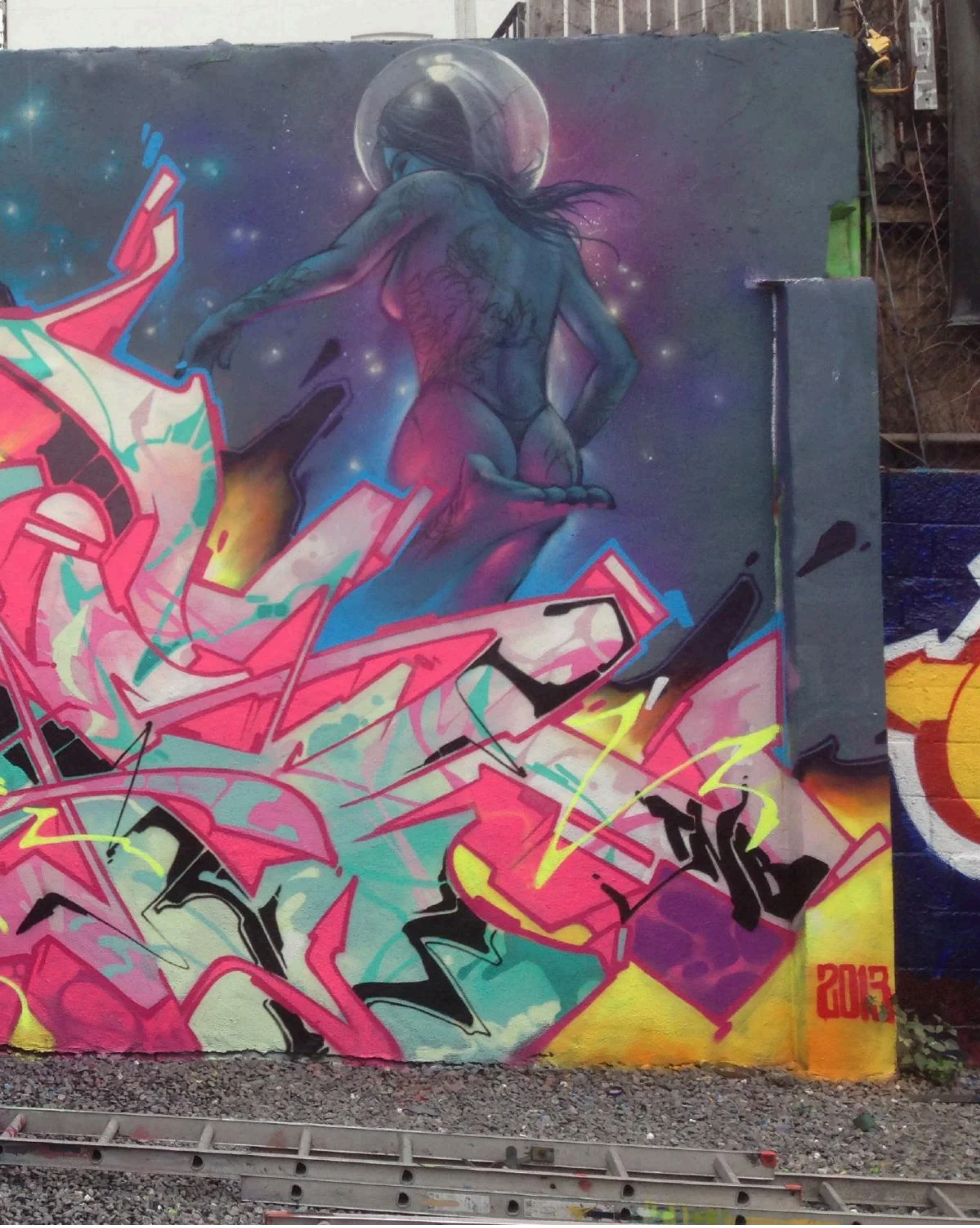
INSTAGRAM: @WISH4CES







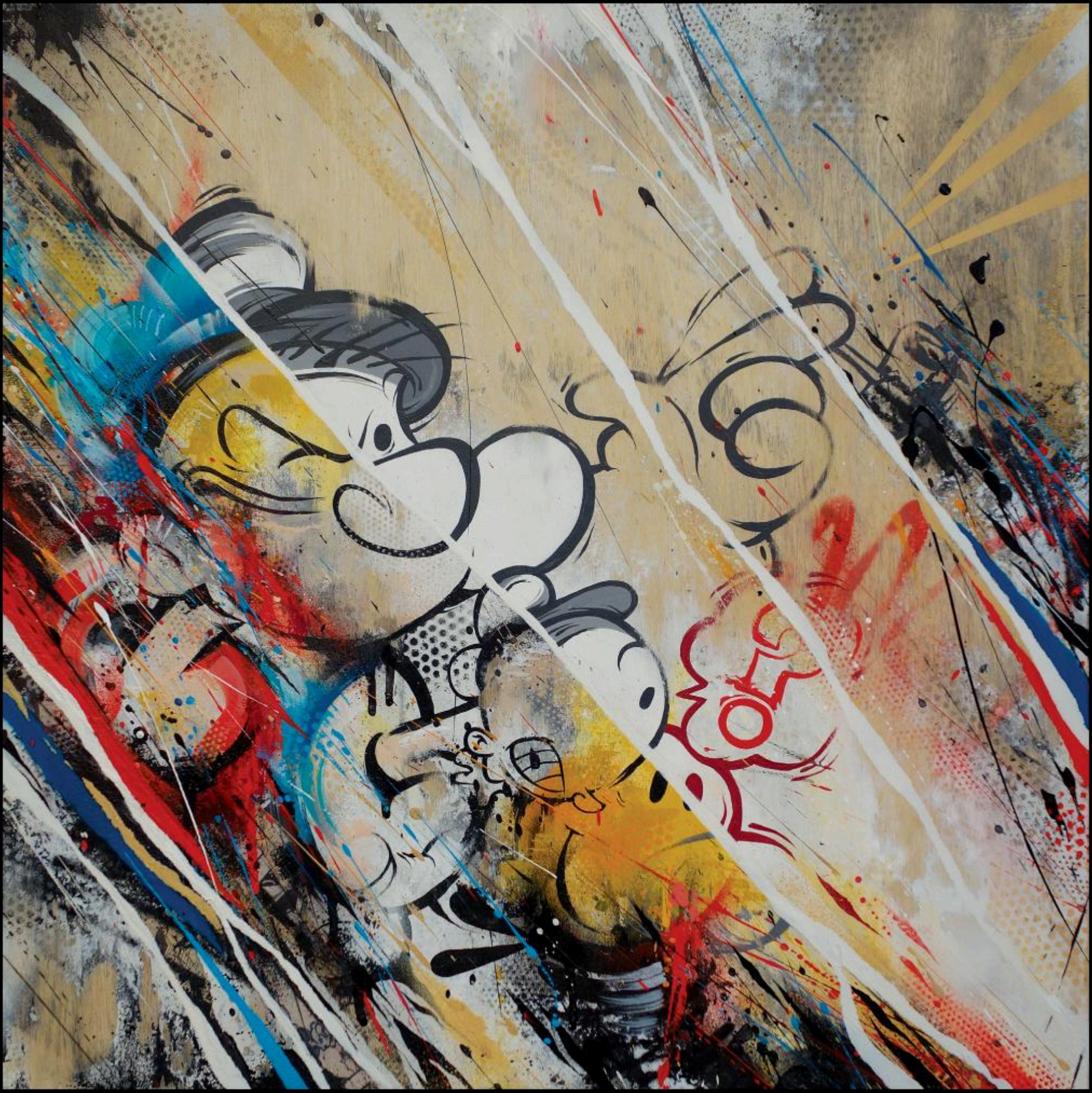



2013

MEGGS 2015
FREE STREET ART TOURS
The Artists paint FREE
We show FREE

DAVID “MEGGS” HOOKE

RISE
FALL



Bizarre Beyond Belief: From waking up until laying to rest, can you describe a day in the life of MEGGS?

MEGGS: When I'm not traveling, I wake up and sometimes go for a long bike ride along the beach, eat a solid fruit bowl for breakfast, then head into my studio anytime after 10. The first part of the day is usually taken up with emails and such. The latter part of the day I prefer to dedicate to making artwork and painting, but this depends on what exhibitions and projects are underway. I always seem to be able to focus and paint better later in the day and into the night, once I've got all the other tasks out of my head.

BBB: Growing up in Melbourne, how would you describe the street art scene in Melbourne at the time?

MEGGS: At the time I started hitting the streets with stencils, posters, stickers, etc., the scene was really starting to bubble over with a lot of people making work. There was a lot of random stuff, but definitely a core of dedicated crew who were hitting up work consistently, which is what inspired me and led to me being a member of Everfresh. There were a lot of DIY exhibitions, shows, and parties happening within the scene. I feel that all of this nurtured it into building real connections and collaborations both within the street art scene and in a general sub-culture sense as well.

BBB: How big, if at all, has been the shift in public opinion in the street art and graffiti craft since you began to practice?

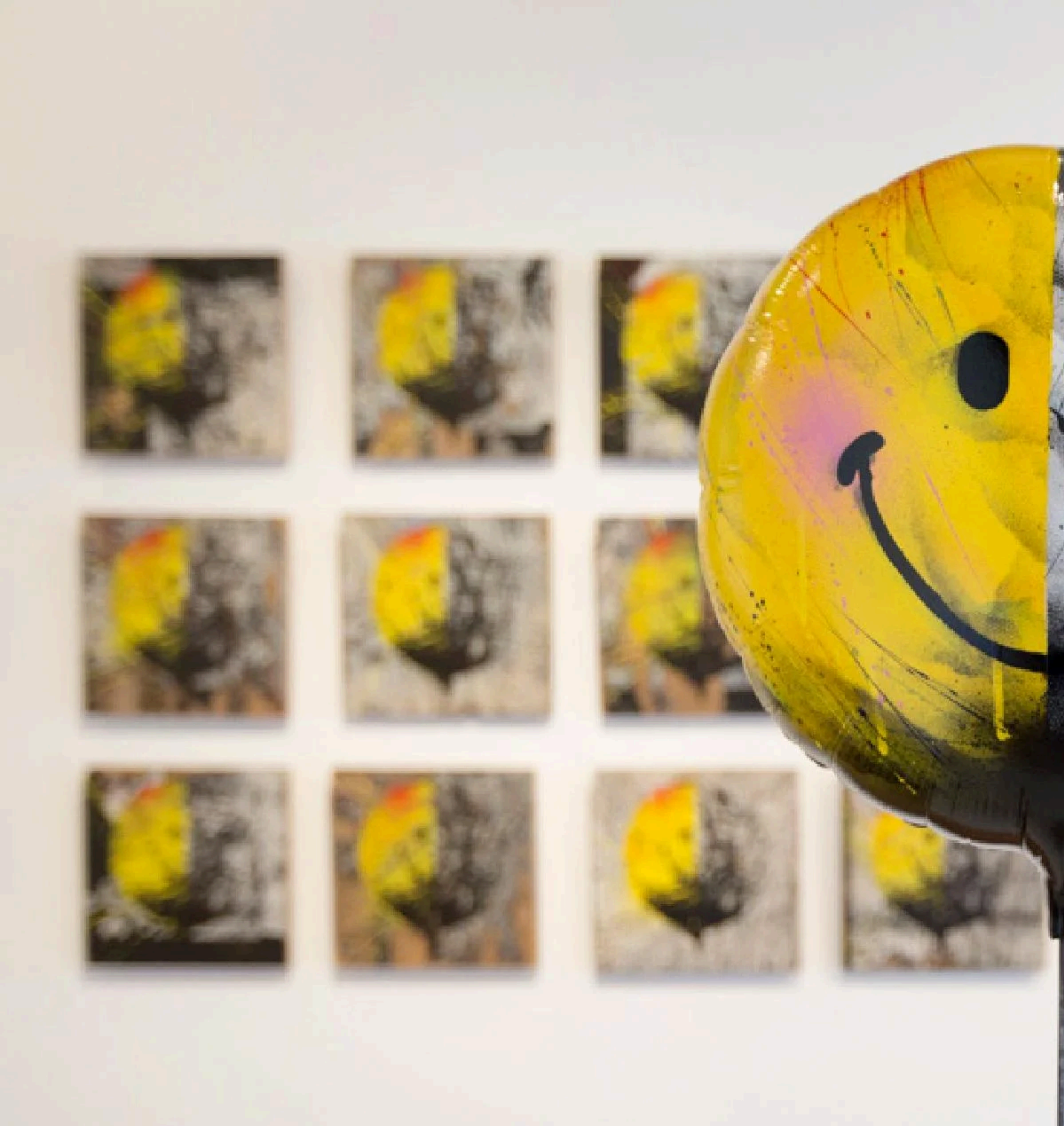
MEGGS: There has definitely been a large shift in public awareness and opinion since I started. It seems that in the last 10 years the scale of street art/public art has grown tremendously. Now, mural art has become the next evolution – which is hard for anyone interested in art to ignore! I'd like to think the general public perception has changed and that people are now a lot more interested in the possibilities of graffiti and public art, the artists practicing it, and the messages we convey. You just have to look at the scale and global reach of artists like JR to see how it can affect people both locally and worldwide.

BBB: Also, do you feel the aesthetics of the scene has changed?

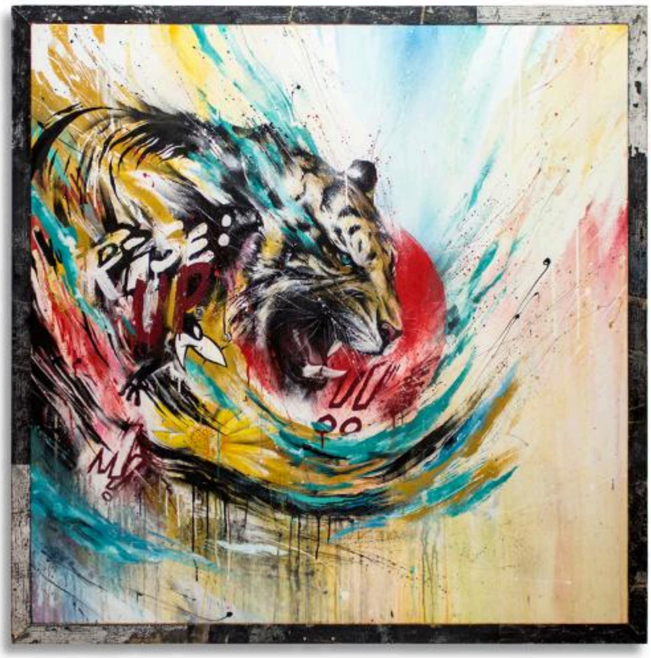
MEGGS: That is a difficult one to answer, as aesthetics and styles are so varied now. In terms of painting walls for my generation, it seems that aerosol has become less dominant, and a lot of 'muralists' now come from a more trained, illustrative background and use a lot more brushwork & traditional painting techniques. In some ways mural art has perhaps come full circle, but I think its really exciting to see how theses techniques are used

PHOTO: ABOVE: (R&F INSTALL), 'RISE & FALL' INSTALLATION, STOLENSPACE GALLERY, LONDON 2015 - PHOTO: MIYA TSUKAZAKI

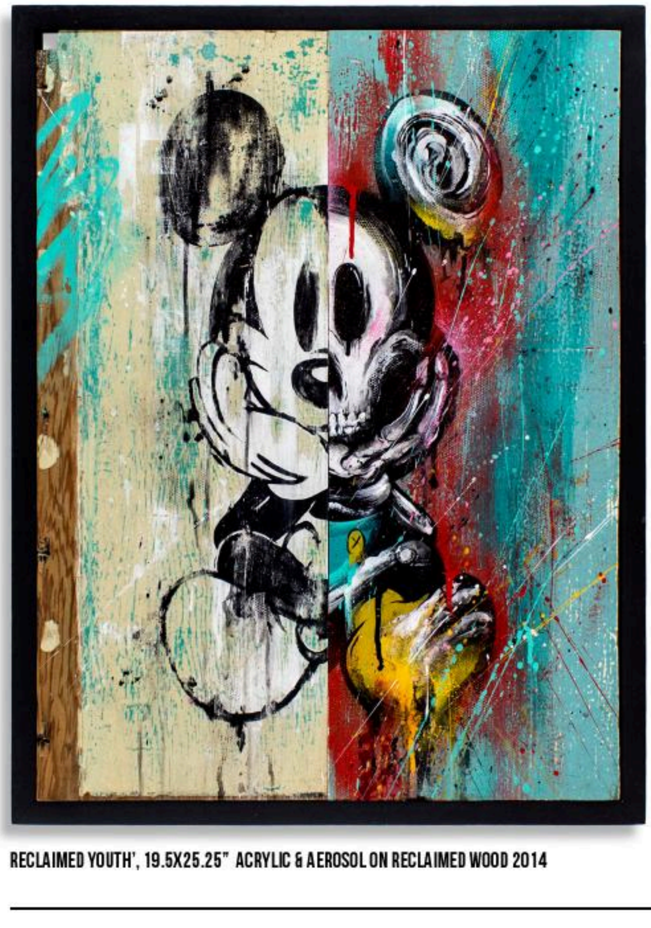
PHOTO LEFT: 'SPOILED ROTTEN' BALLOON SCULPTURE & INSTALLATION, INNER STATE GALLERY DETROIT 2014 - PHOTO: JEREMY DEPUTAT



'SPOILED ROTTEN' BALLOON SCULPTURE & INSTALLATION, INNER STATE GALLERY DETROIT 2014 - PHOTO: JEREMY DEPUTAT



'RISE UP, BACK ON THE STREET', 46X46" ACRYLIC & AEROSOL ON CANVAS 2014



RECLAIMED YOUTH', 19.5X25.25" ACRYLIC & AEROSOL ON RECLAIMED WOOD 2014

in innovative ways and how more artists are pushing boundaries on what's possible in urban art.

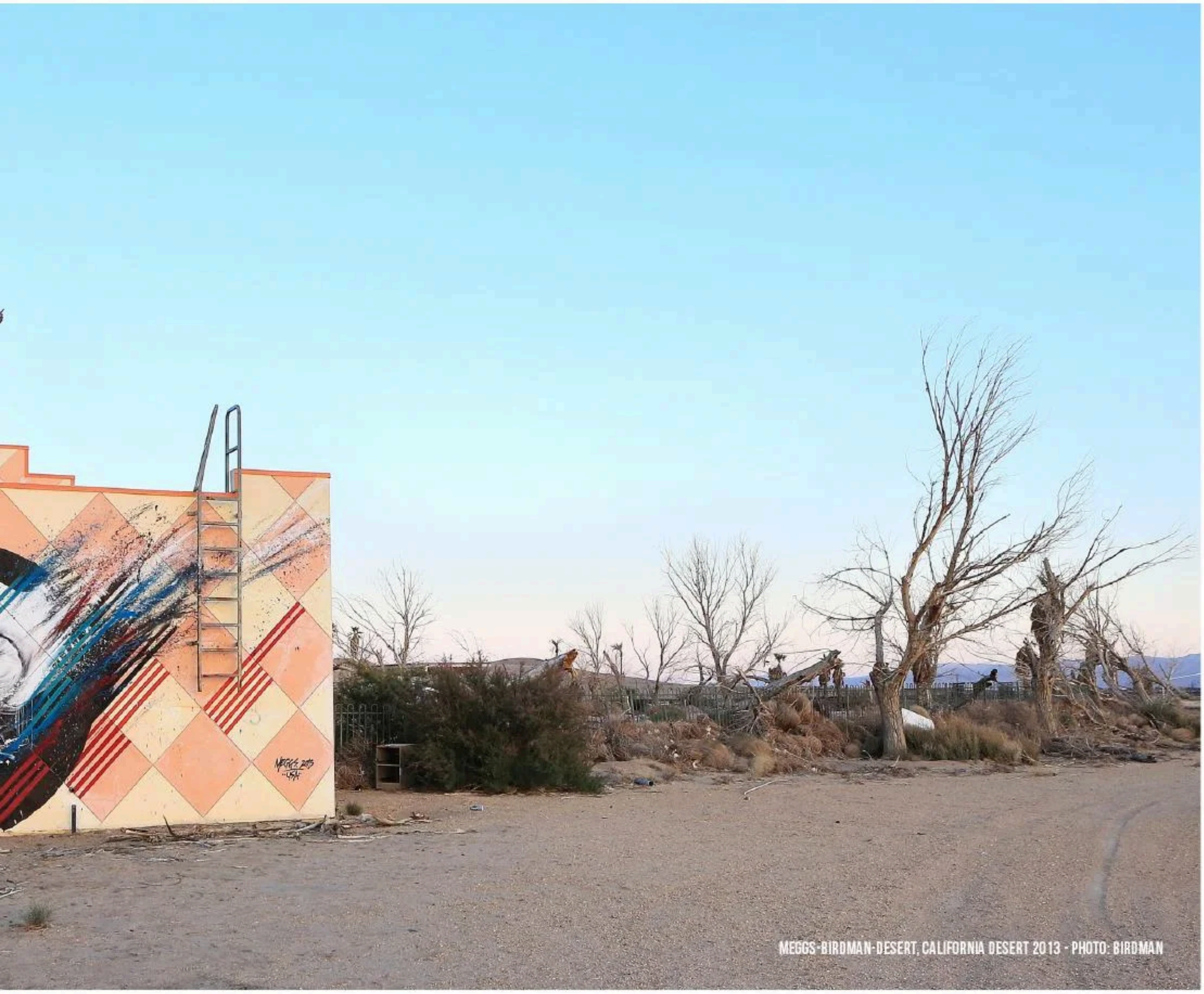
BBB: As both a street artist and a fine artist, how does your creative process change or transform when approaching the different media?

MEGGS: The difference in my process is that my studio work is more of an intuitive and layering process, where I can be more involved in creating textures and letting

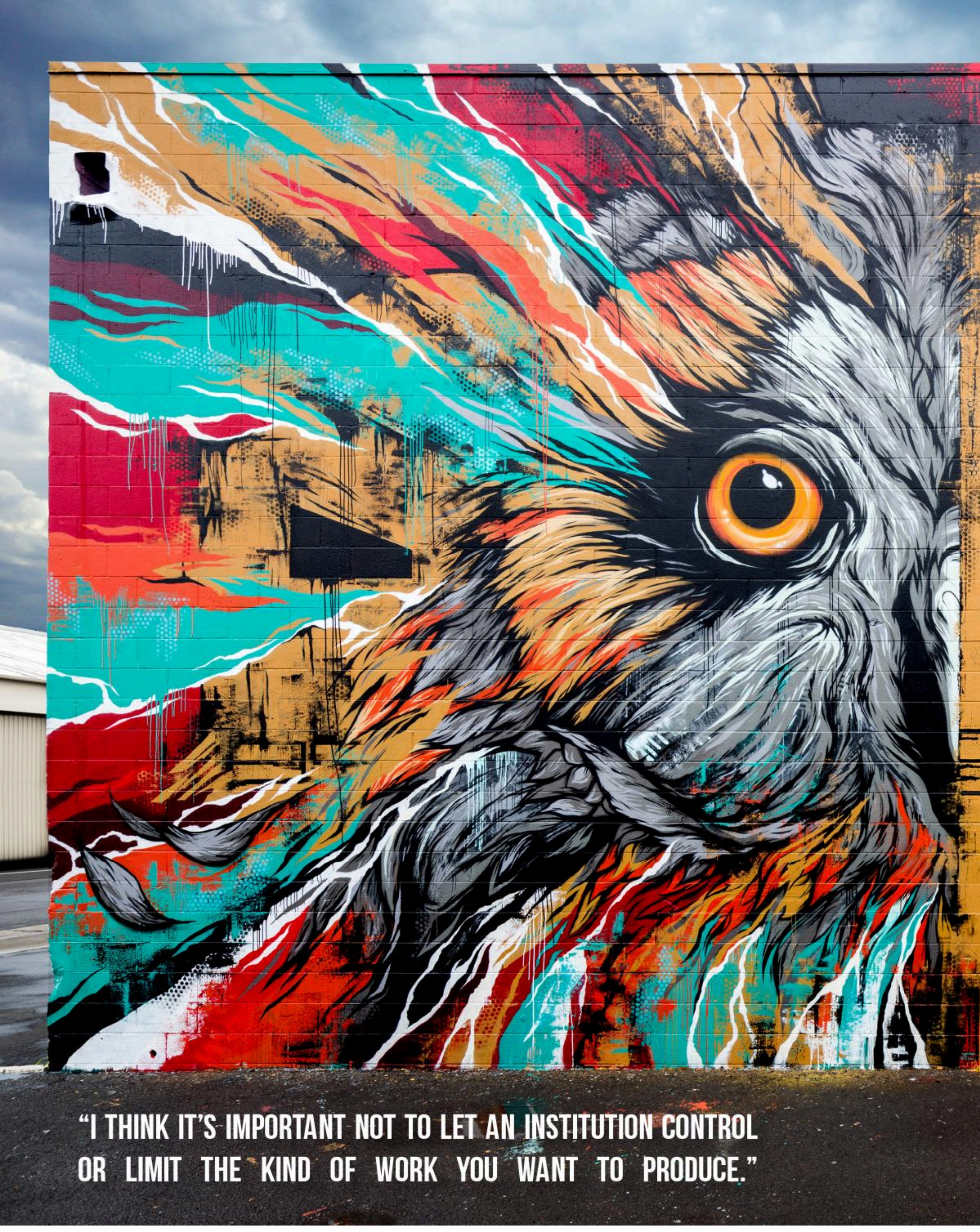
the painting develop and build during the process. I also paint with more small details on canvas/wood work, as I love the more intricate textures and splatters that happen during this process. With murals I try to be a lot more economic with paint and time, so they are somewhat more planned out. I try not to get too distracted by the small details and focus on the impact of the larger image. It's evolving more for me lately, where I've been exploring ways to bring these textures and paint effects from the studio out to a larger scale.

BBB: The scale of work often differs immensely between galleries and the street, how do mentally prepare for a piece?

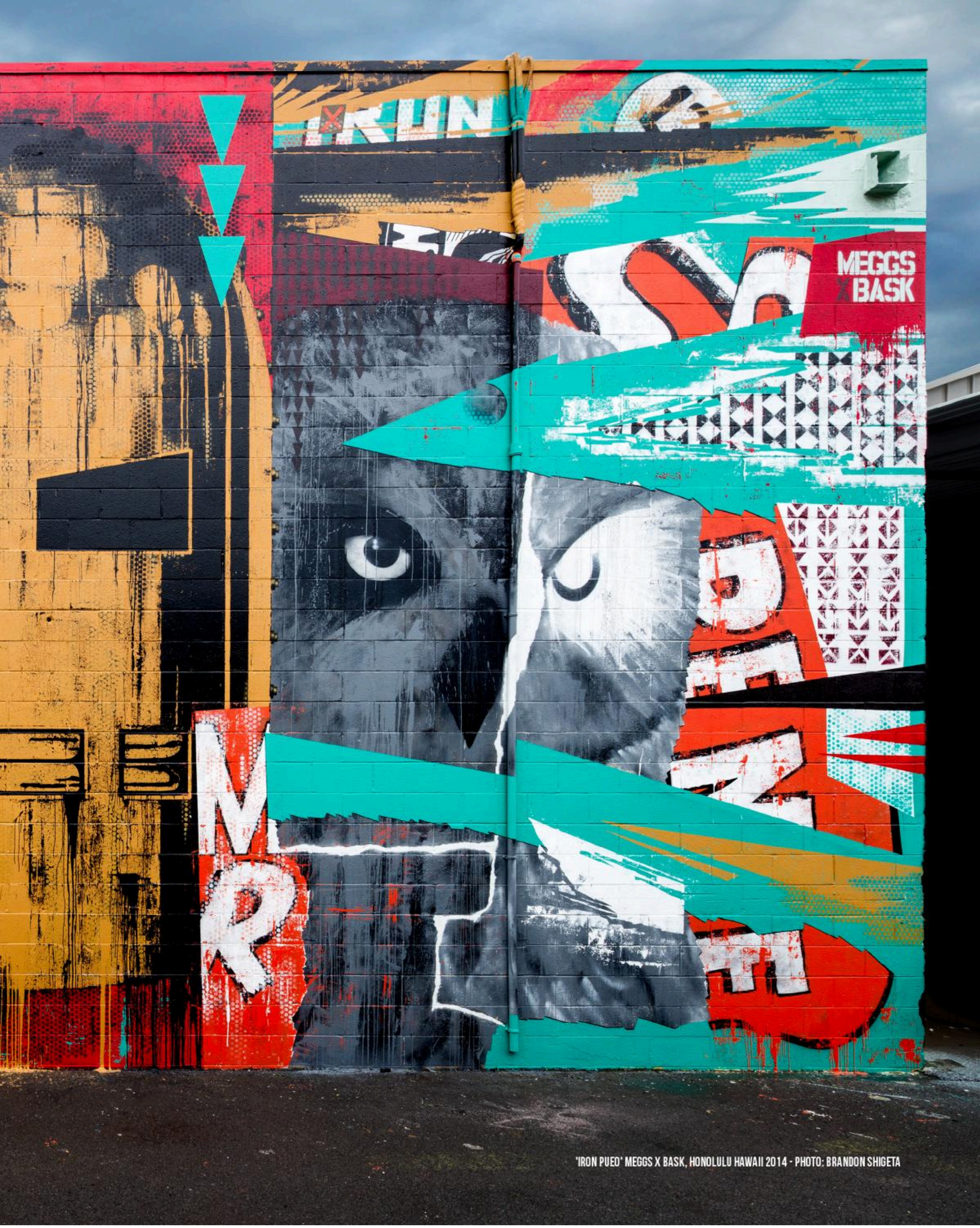
MEGGS: The way I approach it is to look at a mural as the cleaner, more graphic version of my painted works. I just try to be as mentally and practically prepared as possible, whenever possible. This isn't always the case, which is the challenging and satisfying part of painting on a larger scale. When painting on a large scale, I have



MEGGS-BIRDMAN-DESERT, CALIFORNIA DESERT 2013 - PHOTO: BIRDMAN



“I THINK IT’S IMPORTANT NOT TO LET AN INSTITUTION CONTROL OR LIMIT THE KIND OF WORK YOU WANT TO PRODUCE.”


RUN
MEGGS
X BASK

'IRON PUEO' MEGGS X BASK, HONOLULU HAWAII 2014 - PHOTO: BRANDON SHIGETA more of an idea of how I'll build the piece up in the most efficient way, which comes from learning to paint in traditional graffiti methods as clean as possible. As I mentioned above though, I'm currently exploring new ways to be loose and more painterly with my walls. It is also a matter of figuring out what can be done, where, and in what amount of time, the weather, lifts, and not being able to make a huge mess, etc. In my studio I'm getting paint everywhere (laughs), which is unfortunately not always applicable in a public space.

BBB: As a founding member of the Everfresh Crew, can you describe the concept and intentions of the collective?

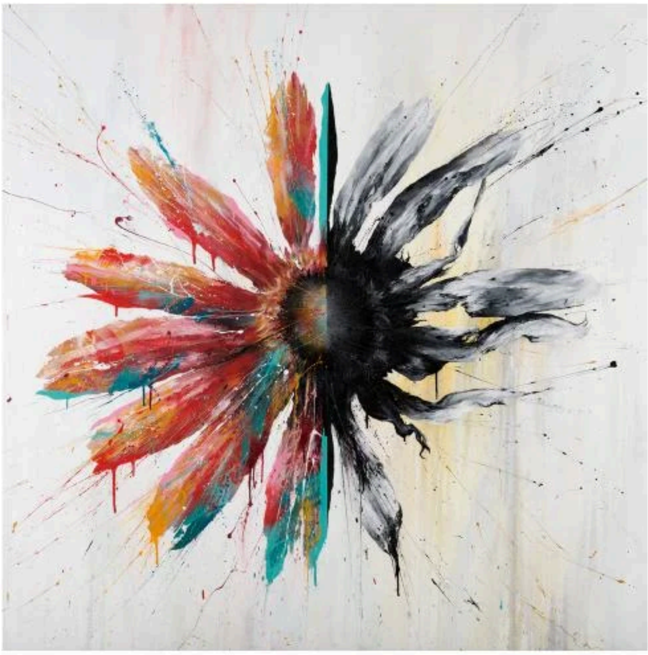
MEGGS: There was never initially a concept or intention for Everfresh when it first started. I came aboard shortly after several of the guys already had a warehouse space, which at that time was just a space we could rent cheaply as a group and basically do whatever we wanted in. It was a space we could paint, party, make a huge mess, and just hang out in. This evolved into a move into a larger space and 9 of us working together, on more and more studio work and street work. I guess our only intention was to make art, learn from each other, get up on the streets, and drink beer on the weekends.It organically grew into more of a collective after years of the guys consistently putting up work. It was unique for a group of street artists with different styles and backgrounds to be painting together. Having our own warehouse meant Everfresh could become a hub for many other artists to roll through. We had parties, several exhibitions, and hosted artists and homies from interstate and around the world. For most of us, the Everfresh studio and core collective became our lives. Working, hanging, and even living there at times almost 24/7. I def wouldn't be where I am today without the support, competitiveness, and skills I learnt during our 10 years together!

BBB: Considering you attended Swinburne University School of Design, do you feel as if this was integral part of your development as an artist?

MEGGS: After University I worked as a graphic designer before making a gradual transition to art full-time. My artistic practice was for the most part self-taught and learnt from my Everfresh brothers. But, coming from a design background meant I had a lot of basics already covered. As a professional artist, I think it's been extremely beneficial to have a design background – in terms of working on the computer, working with clients where necessary, meeting deadlines, and understanding the value in self-branding and professional presentation of my work.

BBB: Would you advise younger aspiring artists to attend artistic institutions?

MEGGS: I'd say to a point, yes. Graphic design training was helpful, but I also wish I had more formal training in traditional painting practice. A lot of which I've had to learn along the way came from trial and error or my friends' teachings. I think it's important not to let an institution control or limit the kind of work you want to produce. It can be more about learning the rules, so then you know better ways to break them!



BBB: If your city was on fire and only one of your walls was remaining as an artifact which one would you choose?

MEGGS: That really depends which city. If it were Melbourne, I'd have to say the Everfresh Collab mural, 'Welcome to Fitzroy,' which we did as a crew collaboration in 2009. I feel that this wall was iconic for us as a crew and for the city of Fitzroy/Collingwood, our beloved stomping ground. In more recent times, elsewhere in the world, I would have to say my 'Rise Up' Tiger mural in Detroit. At 6,000 square feet, it is my biggest solo mural project to date and a personal milestone. I've received countless positive reactions that it provides somewhat of a symbol of hope and strength that the city can identify with as it moves into a new era of regrowth. To know that I was able to have a positive effect on so many people with one mural, it's indescribable.

BBB: With 2014 in the rearview mirror, what can we expect from David "MEGGS" Hooke in 2015?

MEGGS: 2015 is shaping up to be another very busy year. I have multiple group shows with ThinkSpace Gallery LA, as well as a solo show at the LA Municipal Art Gallery as part of the larger 'Beyond Eden multi-gallery event in October. I also have several new mural and brand collab projects in the works. On the radar right now is SXSW in Austin with Pow! Wow! Hawaii and Seawalls: Murals for Oceans, Mexico with PangeaSeed.

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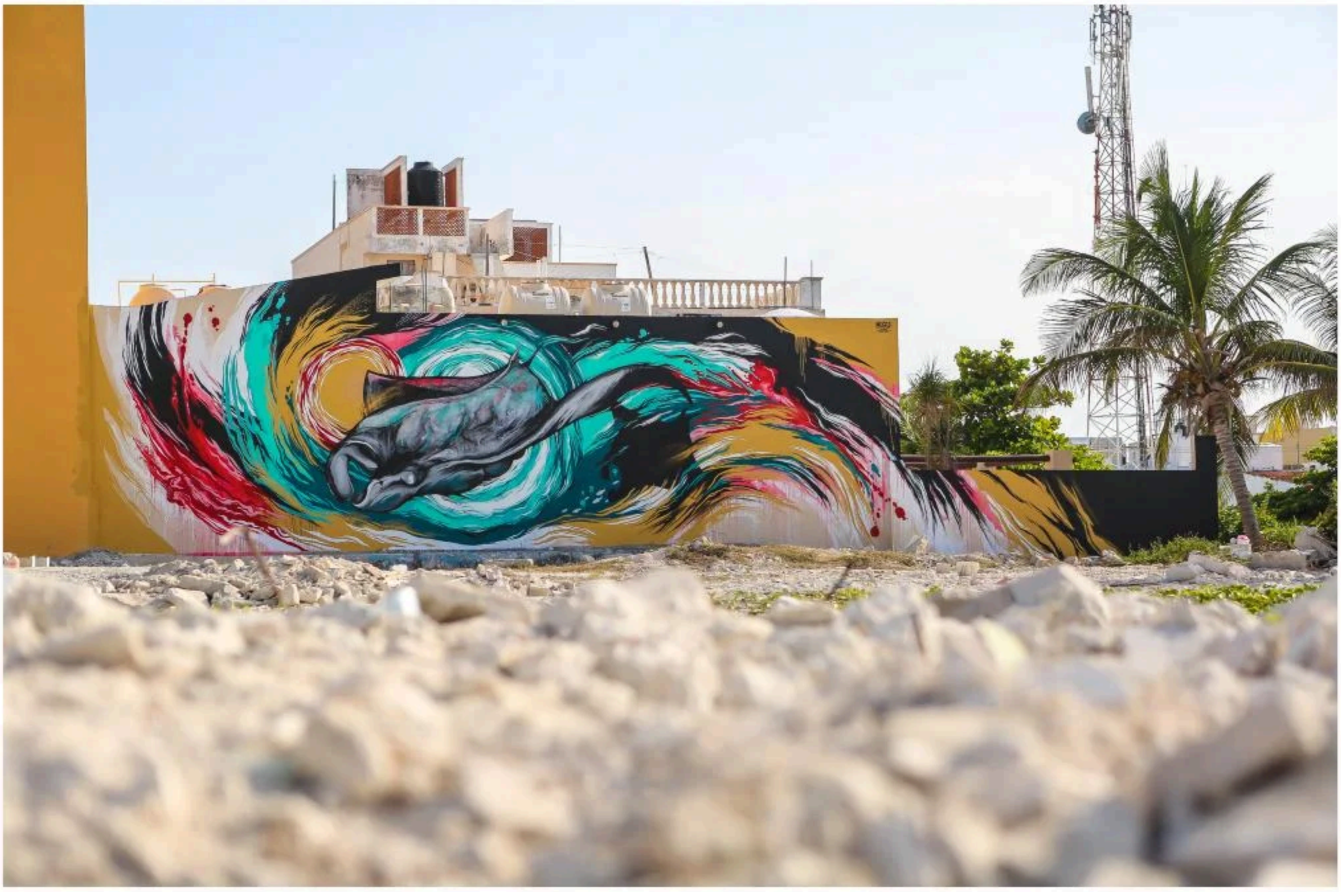

'RAY OF HOPE', ISLA MUJERES, MEXICO 2014 - PHOTO: TRE PACKARD

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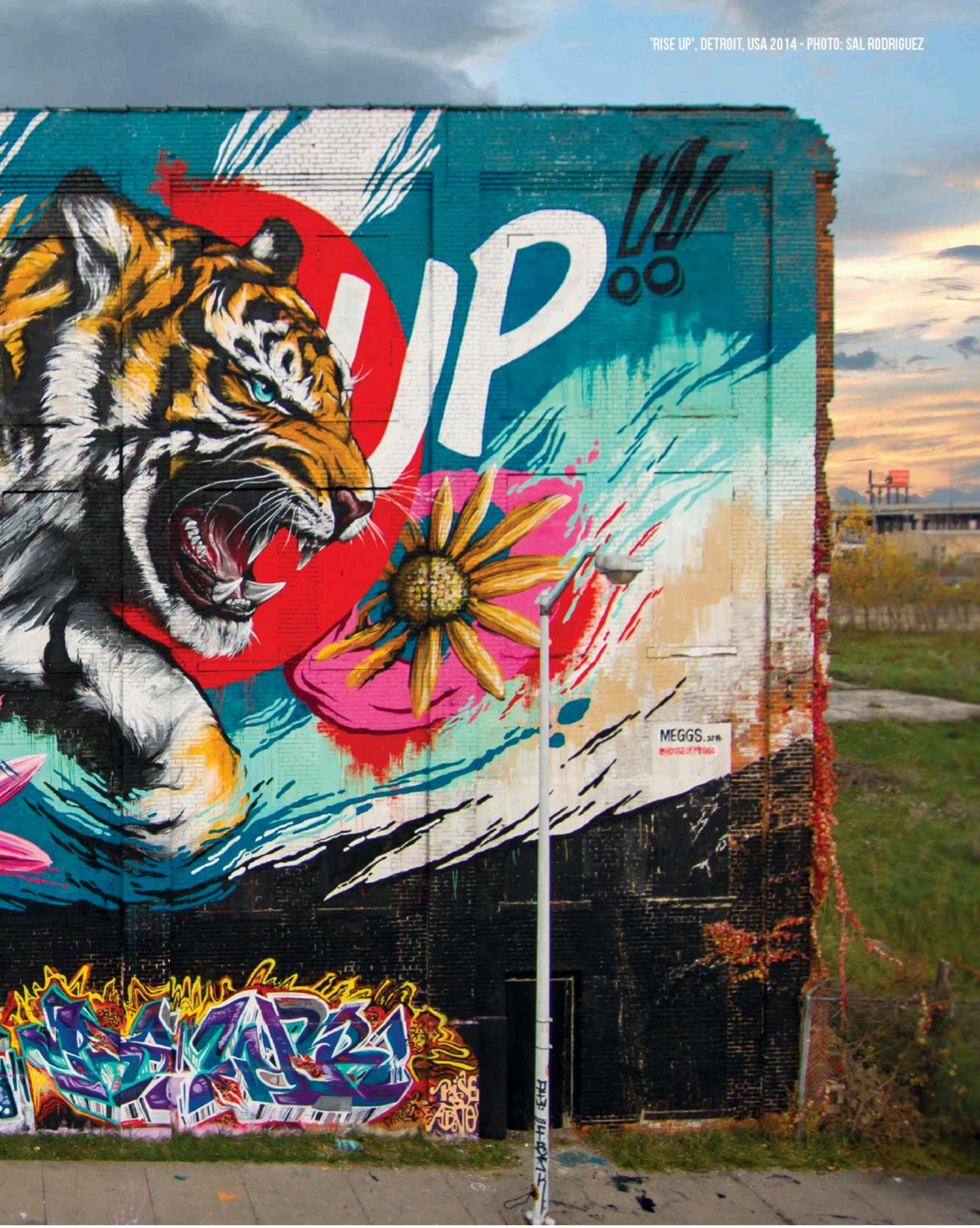
UP!!!
MEGGS. 2014
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'RISE UP', DETROIT, USA 2014 - PHOTO: SAL RODRIGUEZ